A TREATISE OF Growth in Grace, IN SUNDRY SERMONS:

Preached by that lately eminent Servant of JESUS CHRIST,

SAMUEL SLATER,

late of St. KATHERINES near the TOWER.

Psal. 92. 12, 13, 14. *The righteous shall flourish like the Palm tree; he shall grow like a Cedar in* Lebanon, *&c.*

Hosea 14. 5. *I will be as the dew unto* Israel; *he shall grow as the Lilly, and cast forth his roots as* Lebanon.

Heb. 13. 7. *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

London, Printed for *R. Boulter*, at the *Turks Head* in *Cornhil*, over against the Royal Exchange. 1671.

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Cambridge, Printed for R. Bentley, at the Thatch Head in Corn-hill over against the Royal Exchange, 1671.

To the Reader.

READER,

THE Subject *of this* Book *is* Growth in Grace, *a noble* Subject, *yea the moſt noble; for what is more excellent and deſirable than* Grace, *and* Growth *in it? Thereby our* Election, *likeneſs unto* God, *union with* Chriſt, *inhabitation of the* Spirit, *ripeneſs and readineſs for* Glory, *are clearly* evidenced *unto us. This is therefore the principal* Argument *wherewith a* gracious Soul *ſhould be taken, and lay out the principalleſt of its* time *and* ſtrength *in getting thereof, and growing therein: It argues ignobleneſs of ſpirit to ſet any* limit *or* meaſure *to* Grace *and* Holineſs, *ſhorter than what the* Spirit of God *it ſelf hath*

ſet, viz. The meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; *whoſo doth it, blunts the edge of deſires and endeavours, and will ſit down* content *with one* grain *of* Grace. *The* Reverend, laborious *and* judicious Preacher *of theſe* Sermons, *whoſe* Growth in Grace *was well known, would have you, not only* gracious, *but* eminently gracious, *Cedars, not ſhrubs, which will tend to your* greater advantage *than can be expreſs'd: Be pleaſed therefore to read, and ſeriouſly conſider, what is herein* tendred *unto you, and you will find your* hearts *ſo* warm'd *thereby, that you will be of the* Authors *mind, concerning the great* Duty *of* growing in Grace; *which that you may be, and ſo do, is the Prayer of him who deſires your Perfection.*

SERM. I.

2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in Grace, and in the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: To him be Glory, both now and for ever,* Amen.

WHen the Apoſtle had cautioned the holy perſons that he deals withall concerning their ſtedfaſtneſs, and ſtability; he ſubjoyns (in the words that I have read) a further duty, and brings it in with a *but*; importing that it was not enough for them for to keep their ſtedfaſtneſs; not ſufficient to the diſcharge of them, that they loſt no ground, that they did not go back, that there were not a retrograde motion: But they muſt look onward, ſaith he, you muſt be careful that you do not fall from your ſtedfaſtneſs. I but that's not all, you muſt not only be ſtedfaſt, and ſetled in your condition and ſtate, but you muſt be upon your advances; you muſt be careful of this, that you grow; not only that you do not *decay*, but that you *increaſe*: not only that you do not abate, but that you do advance: not only that you hold your own, but that you get more and more of the Grace which you are already partaker of. A great duty, which I would ſpeak ſomething to: and the point is clearly and plainly from the Text this,

Doctr. That they that are called to be partakers of Grace, muſt be careful of this, that they grow in Grace. They that have Grace (have it in the truth of it) muſt not reſt in that; No, they muſt not: but their duty is to grow in Grace.

Now will you conſider a little this burden of duty: It is properly to be laid upon the ſhoulder and back of a Saint. It is a duty properly belonging to ſuch as have Grace to perform. It were a vain thing for to perſwade a man that hath no life in him, for to look to his health, to the improvement of his ſtrength. It is as vain a thing for to perſwade a man that's dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, that is a ſtranger to Grace, to perſwade him to abound in Grace, to grow in Grace: There muſt be Generation, before there can be Augmentation: there muſt be life before there can be growth. And therefore that which is properly to be urged upon ſuch as have no Grace, is that they would look about them, and ſo far as may be, get in with God. Though it's true, it is impoſſible for any perſon that is a ſtranger to Grace, to perform any act of Grace, in order to the partaking of Grace: but we muſt wait upon God, uſing exhortations, and ſee how the Lord will pleaſe to come in, and ſet them home upon the heart. But ſuch, it's their duty, whether they can do it or no: It's their duty to look out after Grace, to have it, that ſo having it, they may increaſe in it. But otherwiſe, for increaſe and growth in Grace, that's not a duty ſo properly to be charged upon perſons that are ſtrangers to it: And let ſuch conſider with themſelves, how ſad their condition is: Such as have no Grace at all, how ſad their condition is upon this account, That they are not in a capacity for to have

ſuch

ſuch a duty impoſed and charged upon them.

But ſecondly, Conſider that this duty of growing in Grace: It is moſt properly belonging to them to perform, that are already partakers of Grace: That have ſparks ſtricken by God, their duty is that they nouriſh and cheriſh their ſparks, and do labour to bring it up to a flame. Grace, it is a ſeed of Gods caſting into the ſoul, and ſometimes it is very inconſiderable as to the bulk and magnitude of it, but like a grain of Muſtard-ſeed: I but it is improveable, and it is a duty incumbent upon them that have this Seed caſt into them, to improve it, that it may grow up to a great tree.

It is a *duty*. It's moſt true alſo that it is a *priviledg*. It is the priviledg of a Saint and Believer, that he ſhall grow. They that are planted in the houſe of the Lord (as we had it in the Pſalm that we ſung), they ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God: They ſhall ſpring, flouriſh as the Palm-tree, grow as the Cedars in *Lebanon*. This is the priviledg: this is one branch of the Covenant that God hath made with his people. I but you muſt know, that theſe priviledges they are not granted to us, that we ſhould be careleſs and ſloathful, but rather to quicken us up to diligence in duty: And indeed our duties do lye much in priviledges; that which is a priviledg, is alſo a duty: As to inſtance,

It's the priviledg of a believer, that he ſhall be kept through the power of God through Faith unto unto Salvation. But it is withal, the duty of a Believer to keep himſelf. He that is born of God, he keepeth himſelf, and the wicked one toucheth him not: And Gods keeping of his Saints, is by the means of their care and diligence for to keep themſelves.

It is the priviledg of a Believer, a Covenant priviledg, that he ſhall not depart from God. I will put my fear into their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me: But it is alſo the duty of a child of God, to do his utmoſt indeavour, and to uſe his greateſt diligence and care, that he never do depart from God: And by that care of his, not to depart from God, God doth bring over to him the comfort and benefit of the Covenant-priviledg, that he ſhall not depart from him. And truly we cannot reckon upon the comfort and benefit of the priviledg, any further than we are careful to anſwer to our duty. God will be true to his promiſe; and he diſcovers his faithfulneſs in performing his promiſe of working up the hearts of his people to a care of doing their duty. So far this particular.

It is the priviledg of a Saint, that he ſhall grow: Shall he? I but its his duty to grow: God hath made it both a priviledg and a duty; and if ſo be that we ſhall have the comfort of the priviledg, we muſt make Conſcience of performing the duty, and make it our buſineſs from day to day to be growing in Grace.

Grow in Grace,] Truly it is a ſtrange kind of Riddle, and I do profeſs I would be ſeriouſly minded in what I ſpeak now, ſpeaking to a point that doth very nearly concern all that do pretend to Grace and holineſs. I ſay, that I am ſpeaking to a point which I think is as miſterious, one of them, as moſt that concern practical godlineſs. And I am apt to think there is as little of judiciouſneſs diſcovered in the part of Godly perſons, of thoſe that are truly godly; as little of judicial obſervance diſcovering it ſelf about this thing, as about any one thing.

thing that concerns practical Godlineſs. *Growth in Grace*; our Conſciences are able to witneſs with us, or againſt us, whether we ſtudy this matter, whether we beſtow any ſerious thoughts about it, yea or no: whether we underſtand it, and know what belongs to this growth in Grace, and are able to give any good account of it: I doubt there are many who are right in the main, that are at a very great loſs concerning the right underſtanding of this matter, and are not able to give any comfortable account; a judicious account concerning themſelves, and how far they are reſponſible to God concerning this thing: Judg in your ſelves whether this be not the heighth of your godlineſs, and your utmoſt reach in your profeſſion. You have ſolicitous thoughts about Grace, about the in-being, indwelling, implantation of Grace in you. You may have, and muſt have, if you be gracious, ſuch ſolicitous thoughts. Exerciſe your ſelves with ſerious conſiderations to ſuch a purpoſe: My ſoul, is there any grace of God in thee, or art thou a ſtranger to it? Is there any ſaving work upon thee yea or no? I know this, that every one that hath a ſaving impreſs upon his Spirit, will be exerciſing himſelf to this purpoſe, and labour to underſtand himſelf concerning this matter, whether he have Grace yea or no. But as to this duty in the Text, concerning growth in Grace, alas how few are there that buſie their heads about it, or are able judiciouſly to manage and perform a ſearch into themſelves concerning it, or to give a good account about this matter. I ſhall ſpeak more to that afterwards, God aſſiſting: Now I give a hint of it, and do ſpeak this the rather, becauſe it being given us in Commiſſion to preach this Doctrine, and to preſs this duty, I

ſpeak the rather in this ſort, that you may come to have more ſerious thoughts concerning that which I have to aſſert from this Text, and to preſs upon you as a duty, that we are to grow in Grace. And to ſettle this upon your apprehenſions, That it is as much a duty for perſons to increaſe in Faith, as it is for to have Faith: 'tis as much a duty for to grow in Grace, as for to preſs after Grace, though it may be we do not ſo reckon upon it. But I can tell you, the ſame God that hath commanded the one, hath commanded the other: We are under as ſtrong an obligation that we may grow in Grace, as to uſe our diligence that we may come to be made partakers of Grace.

It is a duty for thoſe that have Grace, to grow in it. Whats the meaning of that? Its true, there is a metaphor in the phraſe, its taken from living things, that having life, ſo there is a growth. Dead things cannot grow, ſtraws, ſticks, and ſtubble, theſe things they are dead things, and they cannot grow. But there muſt be a ſuppoſition of life where there is a growth.

Now *to grow*, what is it? Why plainly thus; when you hear this is a duty that is incumbent upon you, to grow in Grace; you muſt not only be good, but very good, be better and better, and endeavour to exceed your ſelves. Good to day, better to morrow: Gracious this year, far more gracious the next year: Acquainted with God now, more than acquaintance with God in proceſs of time. Grow in Grace, that you may excell your ſelves: Not only be better than others, better than others that have no Grace; nay, better than others that have Grace, that you may go beyond them: and know, your duty is, that you may go beyond your

your ſelves; that you may be more in Faith, more in Repentance, more in Love, more in holineſs, more in the fear of God; that you may go from ſtrength to ſtrength: that you may *Mutare vires*, as the phraſe is in the 40. *Iſai*. They that wait upon the Lord, they ſhall renew their ſtrength: they ſhall change their ſtrength: they ſhall go from ſtrength to ſtrength; from one ſtrength to another: this is to grow in Grace. To be as good for God, as good for heaven, as poſſibly we can; reckoning upon this, we can never be too fit for heaven, we can never be too holy for the enjoyment of the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away: this is your duty, you that are the ſubjects of grace. Such of you as God hath beſtowed any grace upon, this is your duty, to grow in grace. And that it is a duty, it appears all along in Scripture. How often are we called upon to increaſe with the increaſe of God, to increaſe more and more; to abound, and be upon our advancements. This is that which the Scripture doth preſs upon us very much.

And it's a duty with reſpect to *Grace*: Not only with reſpect to *Gifts*: It's true indeed, ſuch as have the gifts of the Spirit, they ſhould endeavour to grow in them; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, that they ſhould abound in knowledg, and in utterance, and the like. Not only in gifts, for thats a duty, to grow in gifts, in knowledg, and in utterance: but eſpecially to grow in grace.

And it is a duty that is incumbent upon all that are gracious: They that are Babes, they muſt grow, that ſo they may come to be ſtrong men. They that are ſtrong men, they muſt grow ſtill, that they may come to be ſtronger and ſtronger; that the

ſeeble, according to that expreſſion in the 12th of *Zechariah*, may be as *David*, and that *David* may be as the Angel of God: this is that that is required of us. Weak Believers, they muſt grow, grow ſtrong Believers: Strong Believers muſt labour to grow ſtill, grow ſtronger and ſtronger in their believing. Chriſtians, Profeſſors duty is to grow ſtrong in grace; and not only ſo, but Miniſters, the diſpenſers of the Myſteries of God, its as much their duty, as the duty of the Profeſſors, to be upon their growth in grace. *Give diligence*, ſaith the Apoſtle to *Timothy* 1 *Ep.* 1.4. *Give attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine; that thy profiting may appear to all.*

But what are the requiſites of this growth? That I ſhall ſpeak to in a few words, what a growth it muſt be.

1. It muſt be a perceivable growth: It ſhould be ſo. The growth of a Saint in grace, it ſhould be a perceivable growth, a viſible growth, a growth that may be perceived and apprehended, a Judgment may be made upon it: Such a growth the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in that place I mentioned. Give attendance to theſe and theſe courſes, that thy profiting may *appear* to all. Why truly the growth of a Believer in grace, we ſhould endeavour that it may be a perceivable growth: As a man by obſervation can ſay, I ſet ſuch a plant in my Garden or Orchard, and I do perceive that within ſuch a time it is grown ſo much higher, and ſtronger. And ſo for children, there is a perceivable growth in them; you may obſerve how they grow in proceſs of time. Such a growth we ſhould endeavour after, that it may be perceived by others, by our ſelves; that we may be able to give an account of it, and ſay, as *David* ſpeaks

ſpeaks, *In the day whereon I did call upon thee, thou didſt anſwer me, and thou didſt ſtrengthen me with ſtrength in my ſoul.*

2. As a perceivable growth ſo it ſhould be a proportionable growth. If we will approve our ſelves in this matter, our growth in grace, it muſt be a proportionable growth; proportionable to time which God affords us. What! ſo long under the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, and in the profeſſion of godlineſs ſo long ſtanding; proportionable to the time of our ſtanding, ſhould be our increaſes. Why then we ſhould be of a greater growth than others that are but of a later Plantation. The Apoſtle ſpeaks to that purpoſe in *Heb.* 5. *For the time*, ſaith he, *you might have been teachers of others*, you might have come to this, to have been fit to feed upon ſtronger meat. *But*, ſaith he, *you had need to be taught the very firſt principles, and to be fed with milk.* And this he ſpeaks to their ſhame, and in a way of blame.

And then ſecondly, A proportionable growth there muſt be in grace, proportionable to the means that God hath been pleaſed to afford: Such and ſuch large allowances, and not anſwer them: Why it will turn to the ſhame and reproach of a Profeſſor, let him be what he will be, if his improvements do not hold ſome proportion to his enjoyments: If he do not in ſome meaſure anſwer his growth, to the time, and the means, it turns to his diſhonour.

3. And Thirdly, If it be right, it muſt be a fructifying growth, a growth with fruit: ſo as ſtill we muſt grow more and more fruitful; fruitful in all the duties of godlineſs; that as we get more in faith, more in love, increaſe more in holineſs, and in ſpiritual ſtrength; ſo we are the more in ſpiritual fruit-

fruitfulneſs, do more for God. Would it be to the ſatisfaction of an Orchard Planter, to have a tree, that when it was young, and of leſſer growth, bring forth, it may be twenty Apples in a year, and when it comes to be of ſeven years growth more, to bring forth no more Apples; this will not be to his ſatisfaction. So for a Chriſtian that is but of a younger Plantation, to bring forth ſuch and ſuch fruit, and then when he hath been ſeven and ſeven years longer in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, to yield as little, nay it may be leſs fruit to God then he did in his beginning: Truly this is not well, there muſt be fruitfulneſs, and a growth in fruitfulneſs.

4. And then it muſt be a laſting and continuing growth. I tell you Brethren, think of it how we will, the truth is, if it be well with us, we muſt grow as long as we are on this ſide Heaven, but that indeed is no place of growth. Mark that; when once a Saint comes to Heaven, he comes to his perfection, he comes to have a conſiſtency: then he ſhall be as good as God would have him to be, and as good as his heart can deſire to be: But while we are on this ſide Heaven, there muſt be growing, or elſe it is not right with us.

You ſee I have endeavoured with as much plainneſs as poſſibly I can to ſettle this upon your hearts, concerning growth in grace; That it is a duty: Of what interpretation it is: And what a growth it is that God requires. Now for the Reaſons of it.

Grow in Grace: Why it muſt needs be ſo. Why Brethren how elſe will God be glorified by us; how can perſons that have grace, think that they can glorifie God, if they do not grow in it? I tell you, Believers and Saints, they are Gods children; they

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are children of Gods begetting; they are begotten of an immortal ſeed through the Word, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Pet.* 1. Why now conſider, is it for the honour of a Father, to have a child begotten by him that proves a very dwarf; abides and continues in the ſame proportion and ſtature that he was born in: there's no increaſe, either in underſtanding, or in ſtature, or in ſtrength, but a poor creature, a very Babe; ſo born, and ſo continues. Is it for the honour of God to have ſuch kind of children? To beget children to himſelf by Grace, and to have them ſtand at a ſtay, and to have no growth. Believers are the planting of the Lord: Obſerve that place in the 61. of *Iſai.* ver. 3. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, &c. And he hath anointed me, To appoint unto them that mourn in* Zion, *to give unto them beauty for aſhes; the Oyl of Joy for mourning; the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs; that they might be called Trees of Righteouſneſs, The Planting of the Lord, that he might be Glorified.* Mark here, they are the planting of the Lord, and plants being planted, there is ſuch a courſe taken with them, that they may come to grow to bulky-trees: That they may be Trees of Righteouſneſs, that God may be glorified: That God may have the honour of his Plantation, and ſay, This Plant I ſet in my Vineyard; It was little, and ſlender, and ſmall, at the firſt Plantation, but ſee how its grown, grown up to a bulky Tree. This is his glory, this is the glory of the Planter, to ſee his Plant growing up, and becoming bulky, a Tree of Righteouſneſs. What honour is it to God, to have a Profeſſor planted, and continuing a poor ſlender twig, and nothing of ſtrength, or ſtature.

2. Our

2. Our Duty is to grow; to grow in Grace. Why Brethren, Grace is not worthily dealt withal, nor do we answer the purpose of God in bestowing it upon us, if we do not grow in it. Why its given as a stock to Trade withal. Five Talents given to one; to what purpose? That he might imploy them, and improve them; that he might grow in his state; and so two Talents. And it was to the praise and honour of the servants, that they were able to give an account of their Improvement. Grace is given as a stock to trade withall; and it is such a stock as is Improvable to most blessed purposes. Grace hath an aptitude to grow, and we deal unworthily with the Grace of God. Faith is very apt to grow; Love, Holiness, every Grace, very apt to grow: And if we keep this Grace, and do not advance in it, we walk most unworthily of it.

3. And then consider further, That this is the very scope and purpose of the Ordinances which God hath appointed in his Church. One of the main Intents and purposes of God in setting up a Ministry in the Church, is, Not only that people might be planted and brought over to Grace, but that they might grow and increase unto a goodly stature. Observe that passage in *Ephes.* 4. The Apostle gives us a clear account to this purpose: *He gave some Apostles some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledg of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* This is the scope of the Ministry. Judg now what a strange apprehension that is which some

ſome have had, and it may be have ſtill; That now they are above Ordinances: They are come to ſuch a pitch, as they need give no more attendance to the Ordinances, when as this is the very ſcope of them, *Till* we come to the fulneſs of the ſtature. So that I ſay, this is one ſpecial end of God in giving the Ordinances, that Grace being wrought, it might be improved, and that there might be an increaſe, and an advance in it. And Brethren, what ſhall we think, that God hath provided that there ſhould be Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line, Sermon after Sermon, Sabbath after Sabbath, Ordinance after Ordinance, in the ſucceſſion of them, and all to this purpoſe, that his people might hold their own only, and ſtand at a ſtay, and not be a jot the better.

4. And then let us conſider thus with our ſelves, Truly the times are ſuch, and it may be will appear to be more and more ſuch, that as touching converting work, truly we ſee little of that; as if God had upon the matter his number: Nothing to what hath formerly diſcovered it ſelf in the way of the Goſpel, and Goſpel Miniſtry: Alaſs what ſhould we do with the Miniſtry, if while there is little or nothing of converting work, there be nothing of increaſing work; what ſhould we do Preaching? You will ſay (it may be) you are converted to God, and brought over to Faith and Grace. Well, if you will reſt in this condition, and look no further, and preſs no higher, and not endeavour after increaſe, what ſhould we continue Preaching, and for what purpoſe ſhould God continue his ſervants and Miniſtry, and Ordinances to a people, if they will not mind their growth? And what encouragement can we have to attend this ſervice, if we Preach,

and

and Preach, and Preach; and ſtill you continue what you were.

5. And then withal, we have a Head, a glorious Head, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and our duty is to grow, that we may come to hold ſome proportion to the Head; to come to the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.

6. And then conſider, That this Life is not the time of perfection. God requires we be perfect, *Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Are we come to perfection? then indeed we may diſcharge our ſelves of the Duty; but till we come to be perfect, truly we had need be preſſing on, and be ſtill upon our growth.

SERM. II.

I Shall now proceed further in this Argument concerning growth in Grace: And before I come to make uſe of this point, I think it very requiſite to give you ſome account of the Reaſons which this Chapter (beſides what might be drawn up from the whole Epiſtle) which I have ſpent ſo much time upon. The Reaſons that it holds forth unto you, and with reſpect unto which, the Apoſtle doth give this in charge, and thus require of Profeſſors, that they grow in Grace. And if the things be but well weighed, truly we ſhall find that there are very preſſing Reaſons and Arguments to be drawn from this very Chapter, to promote this cauſe, and to quicken Profeſſors to diligence and care,

care, that they may anſwer this, though that is laid upon them. And be pleaſed now to take a brief account of ſome of the particulars which lye before us in the Chapter.

1. Firſt of all, The Apoſtle ſpeaks of the laſt dayes, ver. 4. He intimates to us, that there are dayes which ſhall be the terminating dayes of time. Dayes which ſhall put an end (by their expiration) to time. And ſo it ſhall come to paſs, that time ſhall be no more; there are the laſt dayes. And forasmuch as this charge that is given here, To grow in Grace, doth in a ſpecial manner refer to ſuch times and dayes, which ſhall be the laſt dayes, the concluding dayes: Truly there is very great reaſon that Profeſſors that are reſerved for theſe laſt dayes, ſhould look well to their growth. Alaſs, if ſo be that the Corn be not of a conſiderable growth, if the Harveſt is near at hand, when the growing time comes to be at an end, what hope is there to be had concerning it. If ſo be that Profeſſors that have the laſt dayes coming upon them, ſhall not be found to be in a growing condition, and be careful to anſwer their duty this way, how will they be able to comport with theſe laſt dayes.

2. The Apoſtle intimates to us, That in theſe laſt dayes there ſhall come ſcoffers. (You muſt underſtand that theſe things refer to theſe latter ages, and this latter time of the world that we are fallen into). There ſhall come ſcoffers, that ſhall do what they can to ſcoff others out of their Religion, and make a very mock of Godlineſs, and upbraid the Servants of God with their hopes and expectations. Now upon this account it is moſt rational, that the Apoſtle ſhould thus give in charge, That Profeſſors look to their growth in Grace, that they may be able

able, being well improved in the Grace that is bestowed upon them, they may be enabled to bear up against all the scorns, and scoffs, and derisions that they may meet withal from men of prophane spirits; lest otherwise, through want, or weakness in Grace, they be dasht out of countenance, and so either desert their cause, or act unworthily in the management of it: thats a second thing. Truly its a great tryal, the tryal of mocking and scoffing; When men shall meet with such kind of dealing at the hands of prophane wretches; when they shall flout and jeer at them for their profession, and for the hopes that they bear upon; truly its a great tryal, and it requires a considerable strength of Grace to be able to bear up under such a tryal. Well may the Apostle therefore charge this upon Christians and Believers, that they look to their growth in Grace, because there are last times, and because there will come scoffers in those last times.

3. Consider this withall, That these scoffers, they are such as shall walk after their own lusts: And *Lusts* they are violent, where they have their predominancy, and carry on in a very sharp impetuous manner; and if so be there be not a considerable improvement in Grace, an advance in Grace, Professors, if they be but weaklings, will not be well able to stand before the violence of ungodly men, that are under the power of their own lusts.

4. Consider, That in these last dayes there shall be scoffers, walking after their own Lusts, that shall ingage to a dispute against that great Promise of the coming of the Lord Jesus; That Promise which is one of the main foundations whereupon Believers have to bottome, and found their hope and confidence towards God. Hot disputes there

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are againſt the promiſe of the coming of the Lord Jeſus; and there will be an endeavouring to invalidate the promiſe, and to ſhake the hope, and the faith, and confidence of Believers concerning this promiſe of his coming. Now, upon this account, (in the next place,) It is moſt rational that the Apoſtle ſhould preſs upon Believers, a care of growth in Grace, that ſo they may be able in the ſtrength of that Grace which they have received, and which is well improved in them, to bear up againſt all the ſhakings, and that they may be able for to break the force of whatſoever Argument may be urged againſt this bleſſed promiſe.

5. The Apoſtle gives us an account concerning moſt ſtupendious providences, ſtupendious and amazing providences that ſhould be ordered out: For, ſaith he; The Heavens ſhall paſs away with a noiſe, the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat; and the Earth, with the works therein, ſhall be burn'd up. Now, upon this account, it is moſt properly chargeable upon Believers, that they look to their Grace, and to their growth in Grace; that being corroborated and well ſtrengthened in the Grace which they have received, they may be inabled to bear up under the moſt aſtoniſhing and ſtupendious providences: that when others ſhall ſay, (as *Balaam* ſpeaks) *Alas, who ſhall live when God doth this?* who ſhall live! why, a Believer, a Saint of God, being well grown, having his Grace well improved, may be able to ſay, I doubt it not, but by the help of the Grace of God in Chriſt, I ſhall be able to bear up, and lift up my head with joy, and ſtand with boldneſs before God, when others may fall under deepeſt deſpondences, and be under the

power of aſtoniſhment, upon the account of ſuch ſtupendious providences.

6. I add, That the Apoſtle gives an account concerning a promiſe, which ſhall be aſſuredly performed in due time; of having new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs: And foraſmuch as there is ſuch a promiſe, which is of ſureſt accompliſhment; truly it is very requiſite, that Believers that were planted under the hope and expectation of having ſuch a promiſe performed, that they ſhould look unto their growth in Grace, that they come to be ſo improved in their Faith, and Godlineſs, that they may carry a ſuitableneſs unto ſuch a time, and ſuch a ſtate as that: That they may be able for to bear up under the contemplation of the Glory that ſhall ſhine forth from theſe new heavens, and this new earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſnes. You muſt think, that a little, ſmall, inconſiderable portion of Grace, will not be ſo anſwerable unto ſuch a time, and ſuch a ſtate, as God hath by promiſe ingaged himſelf for to advance his people to; ſo that, in that reſpect, the Apoſtle doth moſt fitly preſs this growth in Grace.

7. God, though he have made promiſes of his coming, and his coming to make a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein Righteouſneſs ſhall dwell; yet notwithſtanding he hath put a long date upon theſe promiſes, and it will be long before ſuch time as theſe promiſes ſhall have their accompliſhment: Why, God is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, but yet for all that, he takes a long date, and ſo it appears; for it is now about 1600 years ſince this Epiſtle was written, and theſe things communicated to the Churches and Saints, for the benefit of

their

their ſouls. Now, in this regard, well might the Apoſtle require, on the part of Believers and Saints, a growth in Grace, that they may be inabled patiently to wait upon God, and to run through all the varieties of providences which ſhould be ordered out upon them, and undergo all the difficulties and hardſhips which they were or are to be put upon, in order to the injoyment of the promiſes which God hath made; which will not well be done without a conſiderable growth in Grace: ſo that, let that be conſidered of; that this growth in Grace, it is moſt properly chargeable upon Believers, upon this account, that God is pleaſed for to take a long day, and to hold his people long in expectation of the accompliſhment of the promiſes that he hath made. And then,

8. I add this; That, as in all times, there have been, ſo there will be in theſe latter times, ſuch as ſhall have their errors, dangerous errors, errors that are proper for wicked men, *Errors of the wicked*: by means of which errors, the Saints may be brought into great danger of falling from their own ſteadfaſtneſs, according to what the Apoſtle doth alſo expreſs, towards the latter end of this Chapter, and as I have diſcours'd largely upon. There will be errors of the wicked, which will indanger the Saints, as to their ſteadfaſtneſs; and upon this account, the Apoſtle doth moſt fitly injoyn this duty of growth in Grace. So that now, theſe 8 things being duly weighed and conſidered of, we may clearly ſee how properly the Apoſtle doth in the cloſe of this Epiſtle, give this in charge unto the Saints and Believers, that they look to their growth in Grace. Theſe things I do ſubjoyn to the Diſcourſe I maintained the laſt day.

Applic. And now I ſhall come to the Application of all. Truly, there is a great latitude wherein I might proceed. I might have proceeded in the Doctrinal part, and ſo might in the Application, and Uſe making of this point: but I ſhall contract my ſelf as much as I can.

Firſt of all, we may gather from hence; That, foraſmuch as it is a duty charged upon thoſe that have Grace, that they do grow in Grace: We may infer from the premiſes, that Chriſtians and Believers are not perfect at once; they have not their perfection in a moment. The womb of Gods decrees, and of the promiſes, do not bring forth perfect births, that are perfect at once. A Nation may be born in a day, a Saint may be born in a moment; but he is not born a perfect Saint in a moment: Believers have not their perfection at once. It is otherwiſe in the ſecond Creation than it was in the firſt; *Adam* was created a perfect man, perfect in righteouſneſs and holineſs at the firſt: 'tis not ſo in the ſecond Creation, 'tis not ſo in the Regeneration. In the firſt Generation it was thus; God makes the womb to travel and bring forth, and the births were perfect births; 'tis not ſo in the Regeneration: Perfect births there are, though they are ſuch as ſhall be brought in due time to their perfection. It's a ſaying of one, No man is perfectly wicked at firſt; ſo, no man is exactly and perfectly godly at once: Grace, it comes into the ſoul by *Gradatem*, by degrees; now a little, and then a little: the light of a Saint, it's like the light of the day, that breaks out more and more, untill it comes unto the perfect day; thus it is in Grace. But take this withal, we ſpeak of Grace as it is inherent, Grace, as it is a quality implanted in the ſoul.

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There is this difference to be put between Juſtification and Sanctification, and ſo between Adoption and Sanctification. Juſtification, perfect in a moment; it doth not admit of degrees; a man is not more juſtified at one time than another: It's true, a Believer may be more clear in the apprehenſion of his Juſtification, he may come to have more comfortable aſſurance of his Juſtification at one time than another. But Juſtification, it is once, and together, and it is perfect: A juſtified man is as much juſtified upon the firſt act of believing and cloſing with Chriſt, as ever he ſhall be all his daies, though his juſtification is not ſo fully manifeſted. — And ſo Adoption, a child of God, that is to be made partaker of the Adoption; he is as truly a child of God at firſt, as in proceſs of time. But it is not ſo as touching Sanctification, Sanctification it comes in in a gradual way: ſanctified a Believer is, and is more and more ſanctified; he is made more holy, he is brought to Faith, and comes to have his improvement in Faith: And ſo it's true of all other the inherent Graces, they are brought on by degrees.

2. I infer thus, That if it be the duty of Chriſtians and Believers to grow in Grace; this is a duty, and according to the will of God. Then certainly, 'tis no duty to grow in ſin, but rather the contrary; we have Gods allowance, and his command for it, that there be a growth in Grace: Why, it's contrary then unto the will and command of God, that any perſon ſhould grow in ſin: you have no command for that: nay, there's no allowance for men to be any thing in ſin: it is the will of God that we be not ſinful; it is the expreſs command of God that we do not ſin: then certainly, we muſt reckon

upon it, that it is altogether contrary to the will and command of God, that persons should grow in sin: and yet, alas, how much is there of such a monstrous, hellish growth in the World? We may observe how men grow from bad to worse; they grow bigger and bigger, and more bulky in their wickednesses and prophanenesses from day to day, according to what the Apostle fore-tells in the last daies, 2. *Tim.* 3. *Evil men and deceivers shall wax worse and worse*: They are bad enough, when they are at the lowest; and yet, as if it were not sufficient, they must be upon their advancings and improvements in wickedness; thus it is with many. A woful growth, to see men shooting up a-pace in wickedness, increasing in their ungodliness, growing up in pride and prophaneness, and coming up to a height in impiety. Thus it is, but woe be to them who are found to be persons of such a growth, that grow in sin, that grow most strong to act their impieties, and to carry on their mischievous designs, and bear up in waies of ungodliness. As touching such, I say this, That they will know in time, that their growth is stinted, and their measure is determined. Grant it, that they do fill up the ephah, they shall do no more than so; and when the ephah is once full, the talent of lead shall be surely laid upon it, to sink it down into everlasting destruction. But,

3. Consider this, It is a duty charged upon us, and especially such as are partakers of the Grace of Christ, that they grow in Grace: Let us now reflect upon our selves; especially such of us, concerning whom it may be presumed, and hoped, that the Grace of God is in them. Truly it is a great duty, and 'tis that that God expects the performance

formance of from us; and 'tis that which I am ſent this morning for to deal with you about: you that are the ſons and daughters of Grace, you that are partakers of the Calling of God according to his purpoſe: it is that which lies upon you, to bethink your ſelves concerning this matter; 'tis a duty clearly lying before you in the Text, 'tis requir'd of you; God hath given it in charge, that you grow in Grace: You are as much bound to grow in Grace, as you are bound to have Grace: it is as much requir'd of you, that you increaſe in Faith, as that you be in the Faith: it is as much requir'd of you, that you endeavour perfecting of holineſs, as that you be partakers of holineſs; this is your duty, and this is that which the Lord doth in his word up and down, require at your hands. Then conſider, you that are, and may be preſumed and hoped for, to be the ſons and daughters of Grace; (as I was ſaying,) Let me beſeech you, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, that you would but bethink your ſelves, and conſider; Do you perſwade your ſelves in your conſciences, and have you ſome good ground to be ſo perſwaded, that the Grace of God is in you, in the truth of it; that God hath kindled a ſpark, that God hath made a plantation, that he hath made ſome impreſs upon your ſpirits; are you ſo perſwaded? Will you then conſider with your ſelves, that this duty lies upon your hand; it is incumbent upon you, you are charged with it, that you grow, that you do not reſt in this, that you have a ſpark, but that you improve it to a flame; that it be not only a plantation, but that it be an augmentation: this is the will of God, this is that that is required of you. The Father that hath begotten you by Grace, and begotten

you

you to Grace, hath begotten you, not that you ſhould alwaies be babes in Grace, no, he hath not; he would have you to be upon your growth, and increaſe, and that you may increaſe with all the increaſe of God; this is your duty, and you cannot deny it, you muſt acknowledge it, the text doth charge it upon you, (beſides many other Scriptures) that you grow in Grace.

I, but is it ſo? can you give a good account of it? Nay, conſider whether your conſciences have not this to blame you for, and to uſe very ſharp diſcipline upon you, in regard, in that of a truth, you do not much intend this matter, you do not much mind growth in Grace: Truly, I am very apt to think, that there are many profeſſors of the Goſpel; who, it may be, and we may comfortably hope they are ſound in the main, have the root of the matter in them, and yet entertain very little thoughts of the matter concerning their growth. The great buſineſs that they ingage themſelves unto is this, that they may labour to make as ſure work as they can, that there be the truth of Grace in their hearts, that there be the root of the matter; that there be a ſpark from Heaven ſtruck into them, and that is all. Conſider now whether that be not juſtly chargeable upon us; if we can but make it out that there is a change wrought, that there is ſomething of the Grace of God in us, that there is a quickening power that hath been put forth upon us, that we are paſſed from death to life, that we are not wholly under the power of darkneſs, but that we have got an eſcape from under that black regiment under which we were held before, and which we belong'd unto: if we can but make this out, we are apt to think that all is well enough;

enough: if ſo be that we can but find that we have a Faith, though it be but as a grain of muſtard-ſeed; if we have but a Faith of adherence, that we can but hang upon Chriſt for life and ſalvation, we are apt to pleaſe our ſelves in that condition, and not driving on for increaſing and improvements in the Grace that we have. Truly Brethren, this is a matter that would be ſeriouſly weighed; and I ſpeak now of a growth in Grace: many may be found that are ſtudious of a growth in gifts, very much ſet to this, to make advances in their knowledge, in their parts, and abilities; that they may be accompliſhed for ſuch and ſuch ſervices, and for diſcourſes; and maintain controverſies, and diſputes, according as immergent occaſions may ingage them: But, as for this growth in Grace, O conſider whether this be not chargeable upon us, that we do not ſo much mind that, nor do not commune with our own hearts, and enter into a ſerious ſearch with our ſelves; O my ſoul, how is it with thee? Thou pretendeſt to be brought over to Chriſt, and to have a plantation into Chriſt, and thou reckon'ſt upon ſo long ſtanding in Chriſtianity; thou haſt been ſo long in Faith, and brought over to Holineſs: O but my ſoul, what progreſs haſt thou made? what advances are there? what increaſes are there? what account canſt thou give this way? O, do we thus commune with our own hearts? What am I better this year than I was the laſt? I have lived ſo long under ſuch and ſuch precious, powerful, and plentiful means; God gives me the ſhowers and dews from Heaven, from Sabbath to Sabbath, diſtilling and dropping down upon me: I have precept upon precept, and line upon line; but where's my growth? what am I the

the better? how do I credit the means and ordinances that I do attend upon, by my proficiency? Truly, Brethren, consider well of it, it is a serious matter, and that that we should be very solicitous about, and so as persons that may be able to give a good account of our selves: I tell you, that it is an argument of a low spirit, a spirit not so well becoming a Saint in Christ, one of the called of God according to his purpose; for to be contented (as I have had occasion sometimes to speak) with *Reuben*'s blessing: I allude to that passage of *Moses* concerning *Reuben*, in the 33 *Deut. Let* Reuben *live, and not dye*; as if he should say, It was a judgement indeed upon him, that he should not excell, because he had gone up to his Fathers couch; he should have been the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power; but he miscarried, and prejudiced himself with respect to his advancement: but yet that blessing he hath, That he shall live, and not die: And so many, (it may be) They can be content to set down with *Reuben*'s blessing, so they can but live, and may not dye, and damn: If they can but make it out that they have so much Grace as will secure them from eternal perishing, that they shall not go down to hell, that they are passed from death to life, and shall never come into condemnation. If they can but make it out, that there is something of the Grace of God in them, though it be never so small, so as that they shall not be put upon the left hand in the great day; this is all they look after. A low spirit, unbecoming a Saint of God, unbecoming the Gospel of Grace, which we are called unto the fellowship of, which doth so strictly and solemnly charge upon us, that we be upon our improvement: O, Brethren, as if

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ſo be that this were a ſpirit becoming a Saint of God! To look no further than this, that there be a ſecuring from hell, and from eternal periſhing; whereas we ſhould ſet our hearts upon this, that we may not only have ſo much Grace as may diſtinguiſh us from the World, and by which we may make it appear that we are not of the World; but we ſhould labour according to the ſpirit of the Goſpel, to be ſo advanced in Grace, that we may be the honour of God, and that we may carry on the cauſe of Godlineſs in an honourable, and in a crediting way. We ſhould labour after ſo much Faith, and ſo much Love, and ſo much Holineſs, and ſo much of the Fear of God, that we may go on ſtrenuouſly, and that we may be found to praiſe and honour, and credit the cauſe of the Goſpel, and may not ſhame the ordinances that we attend upon, and are admitted to the participation of: O Brethren, this is a thing altogether unbecoming the ſpirit of a Saint. When men are at this point, if they have but enough to keep life and ſoul together; if they have but bread to eat, and clothes to put on, though the fare be mean, and the cloathing be courſe; yet, if they have but enough of that, but ſo much, I ſay, as will keep life and ſoul together, they can be content. Indeed, ſuch a ſpirit, in reſpect of the World, is to be approved on: When we can be contented with a lower portion here in the World, this is commendable in reſpect of a worldly ſtate here: But, as to a ſtate of Grace and Holineſs, it is that which is no way to be approved of; that perſons that have ſomething of the Grace of God in them, ſhould reſt contented in their lower meaſures: Truly, this is that which we have cauſe to be deeply humbled for: O! how

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many (to their ſhame may it be ſpoken) are indeed the ſhame of the Goſpel, and of the Ordinances, that it ſhould be ſaid of them quite contrary to that which our Saviour ſpeaks concerning the Woman of *Canaan*, *O Woman, great is thy Faith*. Truly Brethren, it may be ſaid of many of us, O man, O woman, Great is thy unbelief. Great is thy faith; nay, Great is thy unbelief. Great is thy holineſs; nay truly, thy holineſs is very little; thy love its very low. This is that we have cauſe to be deeply humbled for, that we are not more in our improvements and advances of Faith and Godlineſs, ſutable to the command that is here given, that we grow in Grace.

And yet further, this is that which I would ſay, It were not altogether ſo much to be lamented if this were all, though there is cauſe enough of being humbled and abaſed before God upon this account, that we are not more upon our advancement. But alaſs, how much ſadder is it, when we ſhall find perſons upon their declining and decaying, inſtead of growing in Grace; truly it may be feared concerning ſuch, that they are rather upon their decayings in Grace; not the men and women that once they were, for love to God, for zeal for God, delight in Ordinances, breathings after Chriſt, delighting in Communion of Saints, cloſe walking with God. O theſe retrograde motions! theſe backward motions! (thats the meaning of the word) theſe drawings back and declinings; O theſe are to be deeply laid to heart! When this ſhall be ſaid concerning one that ſeem'd to be full of light, and love, and zeal, and reſolution for God, that he ſhall come to be upon his abatements, and not look like the perſon that he ſeemed once to be. When the account

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riſes up concerning a Soul, according to that in the Parable of the unjuſt Steward; He takes an account, How much oweſt thou? fourſcore; put down fifty. When there comes to be ſuch a falling in the account; when we cannot make out ſuch a ſtate as once we could; when there is (*Epheſus*-like) a falling off, a decaying in our firſt Love, a cooling in our zeal for God; O Brethren, this is not to anſwer the duty of the Text: The Text requires growing in Grace. O how ſhall we be able to ſtand before this charge? when Conſcience ſhall witneſs to us that we are rather upon our declining? Truly theſe things would be ſeriouſly thought of, eſpecially in ſuch a day, wherein we had never more need to look to our condition and ſtate God-ward; not knowing what times we may fall into, what tryals we may be put to. O we had need to look to it, and according to the charge that was given to *Epheſus*, to Repent; do our firſt works to recover our ſelves, and labour not only to hold our own, but to be upon our improvements. And therefore thats the main thing I would drive at, and which I would conclude this Diſcourſe withal. I would deal with you in a way of perſwaſion and exhortation, and preſs it with as much earneſtneſs as I could, that as many of you that are the ſons and daughters of Grace, that can give any good account of the truth of the Grace of God that is in you; that there is the true Grace of God in you, and that it is the true Grace of God wherein you ſtand; that you would conſcientiouſly apply to your duty, and remember that this is the charge that God hath laid upon you, that you grow in Grace; and that you be ſtill endeavouring this, that you be better and better, thats the interpretation that I gave of the Text,

Text, and of the duty: That you be ſtill upon your advancings; if you have Faith, and Love, and Holineſs, and the fear of God, and Meekneſs; and if you have any thing of Godlineſs, that you would labour to have more of it, that you may not be alwaies weaklings in Grace: Oh, this is that that we ſhould ſet our hearts upon.

And doth not the very thing it ſelf invite you to it? Why, Brethren; can you have too much of God? can you have too much of Chriſt? can you have too much of Faith and Holineſs? you may have too much of the World, but you can never have too much of God and Grace, till you come to ſuch a pitch of godlineſs, that you need not make any further advances: It was otherwiſe with *Paul*, and he gives another account of himſelf; though, alas, how far ſhort are we of him, and of that Faith and Grace that was attained by him? Yet he profeſſes, though he was not behind the chiefeſt Apoſtles, yet he ſaith this concerning himſelf; that he did not account himſelf to have attained; but he forgets what is behind, and he reaches to that which is before, and preſſes towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus. — I ſaid before, I ſay again, you can *never be too good for God*, you can never be too good for Chriſt, you can never be too ripe for Heaven: when you come to the iſſue and cloſe of all, you will find that you have no more than needs muſt: the wiſe Virgins, they found that they had nothing of their oyle to ſpare; when the fooliſh Virgins came to them, O, let us buy of you, and be ſupplied by you: no, ſay they, leſt we be at a loſs for our ſelves. When you have gotten as much Faith and Grace, and ſpiritual ſtrength

and

and holineſs, by the means and ordinances that you do attend, you will find all little enough: And therefore, O, this is that ſhould make us ſet on with diligence and care, that we may anſwer the duty of the Text, and be upon our Increaſings, and Growth in Grace.

SERM. III.

THere muſt not only be life, but growth in Chriſtianity; and this is the burden which the Text laies upon us; That we grow in Grace.

Now, letting paſs the things that were inſiſted upon, ſhall we buckle to this, as our buſineſs at preſent. My endeavour ſhall be to drive home this Exhortation, and to faſten it as a nail in a ſure place: If you will but give due regard unto that which ſhall be charged upon you, and urged in the name of the Lord: If ſo be that you will but labour to ſtand convinced of this as your duty, and upon convincement ſet up the conſcientious practice of it; undoubtedly, this labour this morning will not be in vain.— And that the thing which ſhall be ſpoken, and preſſed upon you, may be the more ſucceſful; I would beſeech you to conſider what a lovely duty it is, to endeavour a growth in Grace: what a becoming thing it is, for men and women that are called to the fellowſhip of the Goſpel, and to the participation of the Grace of the Goſpel; to be moſt vigorous in endeavouring

ing this, that they may be upon their growth. We love to ſee our children grow; the husband-man loves to ſee his corn ſpring up, and grow; men, in the courſe of their trading, they ſet their hearts upon this, that they may grow upon their eſtates, more big and bulky. Why, is there any thing in this World, wherein a growth is more lovely to ſee, than Grace and Holineſs is? What a ſad thing is it, to ſee poor creatures take a great deal of pains, and are frequent in their attendance upon the Goſpel, and the Ordinances of it; there's not an opportunity that they can well take hold of, but they do; yet to ſee them in a kind of withering ſtate, lean, pale, and ill-favoured; in a languiſhing condition, and little or nothing appearing of any proficiency, of any ſpiritual growth? Indeed, it is a thing that would be laid to heart by profeſſors, that they are not able to give a better account of their improvements in Grace and Holineſs; that there ſhould be ſo much Preaching, ſuch frequent hearing Sermons, they are eaten up (and 'tis well if ſo, if they be eaten,) and one would think well digeſted, and yet ſtill leanneſs appears; one corruption or other eats out the ſtrength of all, and keeps poor creatures under. Truly, this is a ſad conſideration, that we ſhould hear Sermon after Sermon, and injoy Ordinance after Ordinance, and yet come to look upon profeſſors, even concerning whom, there may be a well-grounded confidence, that the heart is right in the main, and yet ſtill in a kind of withering condition; lean, poor, and bare, little more (as I may ſo ſpeak) than skin and bone. Truly, this is that that ſhould be laid to heart: And alas, Brethren, do but think ſeriouſly, to what purpoſe is it to attend the Ordinances, and not to be bettered

by

by them: you would think it a ſad condition, for a perſon to feed every day, feed to the full, with large proviſion, varieties ſet before him to partake of; and yet after all his full feedings, there is nothing of ſtrength and fatneſs, and growth, and increaſe; no bettering by their proviſions; Surely, ſurely, this ſhould ſet cloſe upon our hearts, to think thus, Lord, why is it thus with me? I hear many a Sermon, and attend Chriſt in Ordinances, have many bleſſed opportunities for ſpiritual advantage; and yet I have got little or nothing; others ſee it not, I can give no account of it, it may be as much kept at an under, by my pride, by my paſſion, by one corruption or other, as apt to be overpowered by every temptation, as if I did not give any attendance upon God, in any of his Ordinances. This meditation I deſire may ſettle upon our hearts, and that we would be communing with our ſelves about this matter: as *Rebecca* ſaid upon occaſion of the ſtrugling in her womb; *If it be ſo, why am I thus?* If it be ſo that there is ſuch allowance given, ſuch a proviſion made in ſo ample a manner; if it be ſo, Lord, why am I thus? why am I not more in Faith? why am I not more in love to thee? O, Chriſt, and waies of Holineſs, why am I not more in ſpiritual ſtrength? why am I not able to give a better account? what do I make hearing, the end of hearing? and duty, the end of duty? and do I reſt in Ordinances? Are not the Ordinances given to profit withal, and to improve by? This is proper for us, if we will deal truly in the matters of God, and concernments of our ſouls: this indeed, is proper work for you and me to be upon the daily performance of. This I ſpeak now in more general manner, and to this

purpoſe, that you might give the more due regard unto the things that I am further to communicate to you concerning growth in Grace, which is the Duty of the Text.

Now this is that which I have to preſs upon you, That you would reckon upon it as a duty, and accordingly with Conſcience and care apply it. Set your hearts upon this, that you may grow; *Grow in Grace*. I think (as I ſaid before) it will be the propereſt courſe that I can take for to ſpeak to ſome particulars; and I will ſpeak eſpecially to the main Grace, the Captain-Grace, the Leading-Grace, and thats the Grace of Faith. Think thus, that when you are called upon to grow in Grace, to be ſure, this is the mind and meaning of God, and of his Spirit, that you ſhould grow in Faith, that you ſhould ſet your hearts to this, that having Faith, you may increaſe in it: This is your duty, even a duty incumbent upon every one that hath any thing of true ſaving Faith in him, to do his utmoſt that he may come to have a growth in that Faith: O that this might be conſidered of by you that are Believers! Have you Faith? 'tis good for to make an inquiry, and to ſearch into your ſelves, whether you have Faith ye or no. Have you, look to the growth of it; it is a child of Gods begetting, and it is a child thats committed to your truſt to ſee to the nouriſhing of it, that it be well nurſed by you. Hath God given you Faith in the ſpark, your duty is to look to it that it be improved to a flame. Is it a ſeed that God hath ſown in your hearts, ſuppoſe it be but as a grain of Muſtard-ſeed, it is a duty that lies upon you to look well to it, that this little grain, this ſeed that is ſown, be attended, and that there be an improvement of it. This is your duty,

ty, that having Faith, you increaſe in Faith, that there be a due improvement of it, that you may come to be, not only Babes in Faith, but ſtrong men in Faith; this is that which (I ſay) is our duty, and this I would preſs upon you.

Grow in Grace: Grow in the Grace of Faith: And this I would have you to conſider, that all other growth in the other Graces, they have a dependance upon this growth in Faith. If Faith be in well-liking, other Graces will be in a good condition. Truly I think it is moſtly thus, that the Chriſtian is as his Faith is: If his Faith be in good plight, his other Graces will be ſo too. If there be a flouriſhing Faith, there will be a flaming Love, and there will be an abounding, and an increaſe in other Graces. Faith, it hath an influence upon all other the Graces of the Spirit: Grow in that, and grow in all.

Now if you aſk, But how would you have us to grow, or to what pitch and proportion would you have us to arrive? You perſwade us to a growth in Faith, what growth is it that you preſs us to? Will you now but a little weigh theſe things that I have to communicate.

I tell you thus, your growth in Faith, if ſo be that you will anſwer your duty, it muſt firſt be a growth, practically anſwering to the degrees of Faith, that you come up to the degrees of Faith, and to as high a degree of Faith as you can.

2. That in a practical way you may anſwer the teſtimonies that are given of Faith.

3. That in a practical way you may anſwer the eminent and ſignal examples and patterns of Faith.

4. That in a practical way you may perform the acts, and expreſs the fruits and effects of Faith; all

this in a practical way. And then ſhall you anſwer the duty, and approve your ſelves to be ſuch as are perſons of a well grown Faith.

First of all, when I perſwade you to grow in Grace, in the Grace of Faith, interpret thus; That every believing ſoul is to look unto, and to preſs after ſuch a growth, as that there may be an attainment of Faith, and of Faith in the degrees of it; Thus, we diſtinguiſh of a weak Faith, and of a ſtrong Faith: We diſtinguiſh of a Faith of Adherence, and of a Faith of Evidence and Aſſurance. We ſpeak of Believers; ſome that are poor in Faith, others that are rich in Faith, according to the Apoſtles expreſſion in *James*, *The poor of this world, rich in Faith.* We diſtinguiſh of a *living* Faith, and of a *lively* Faith. We diſtinguiſh of a *combating* Faith, and of a *conquering* Faith. Of a *conflicting* Faith, and of a *triumphing* Faith; ſuch diſtinctions there are. Now our duty is to preſs after ſuch a growth, that we may be in the advancing, and come up to the higheſt degree that we can attain unto. Our Saviour complained of the Diſciples, *O ye of little Faith.* Importing thus much, that their duty was for to be *much* in Faith, and to have a great Faith, a well grown Faith; ſuch a Faith as the Woman of *Canaan*, (of whom I ſhall ſpeak) *O woman, great is thy Faith.*

There are that are *poor* in Faith, they have but a poor degree and meaſure of Faith, but even as much of it as will keep life and ſoul together (as I may ſo ſpeak) all that they can do is but to keep in life. I but now our duty is to look after an *inrichment* in Faith, that we may live like rich men, live at a high rate, that we may ſpend, and ſpend very largely. This is our duty.

That

That we have a *lively* Faith, a Faith ſo improved, as that its quick, and active, and nimble, and can put on vigorouſly, in the wayes of Grace and holineſs; this is our duty.

To grow from one degree to another, to be ſtronger and ſtronger; to proceed from Faith of Adherence, unto Faith of Aſſurance. Not only to have the Faith of Recumbency, that we can hang upon Chriſt, and roul our ſelves upon him for Salvation; but that we may come to have a Faith of Confidence: that we may not only be perſwaded of the truth of Promiſes, but that we may be perſwaded of our perſonal intereſt and propriety in Promiſes. And that we are not only perſwaded of the truth of them, but of our title to them; that we may not only be able to ſay, that, *This is a faithful ſaying, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the World to ſave ſinners*; but that we may be able by Faith to ſay, I and this Jeſus *came to ſave me*, as much as any other ſinners in the World. That we may not be only able to ſay, *He loved his People*, and *gave himſelf for his people*; but we may be able by a well-improved Faith to ſay, yea, *he loved me*, and *he gave himſelf for me*. Thus could *Paul* ſay, ſuch was *Pauls* Faith.

A Faith of Aſſurance, when we cannot only reflect with fears and difficulties, but we can trample upon them, and triumph over them, and ſay with the Apoſtle, *I am perſwaded, that neither height, nor depth, nor length, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, ſhall be able to ſeparate me from the love of God that is in Chriſt.* Such a growth we ſhould have, that we may come to bear up with a holy confidence towards God, that we may be able to ſay, I know whom I have believed, and I know that my Redeemer liveth. We know,

that if this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. This is the Faith that we ſhould preſs after, a Faith of ſuch a ſize as this; of ſuch a proportion as this, and not reſt contented with this, That we can hang upon Chriſt, (though its a great Mercy to have the leaſt degree of Faith) yet this we ſhould be preſſing to, that we may come to a holy confidence towards God. This is our duty, and that that we ſhould endeavour to, that we may come to be of ſuch a grown Faith: thats the firſt thing.

2. Our duty is to grow in Faith, and to be of ſuch a growth in Faith, as that we may anſwer the high, and honourable, and glorious teſtimonies that are given of Faith, that we may be able to give in our juſtification of ſuch teſtimonies, and ſay, thus and thus is Faith teſtified of, 'tis a true teſtimony, I am able to prove it, I am able to ſpeak it out of my own perſon, and from my own experience. Its our bleſſed Saviours ſpeech, *Wiſdome is juſtified of her children*: If we will approve our ſelves to be the children of Wiſdome, we ſhould look after this in a ſpecial manner, that we may be able to juſtifie the ſayings of Wiſdome. Now what are the ſayings of Wiſdome concerning Faith, the teſtimonies that are given of it. Mark, the Apoſtle in the 11th chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, he tells us, That *Faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for; it is the evidence of things that are not ſeen.* Is this a true teſtimony? It may be you will ſay, you believe this, that this is a truth concerning Faith. I, but what of that, Is it a truth in you? Is your Faith ſuch a Faith? Are you able to ſubſcribe to this, and to ſay, yea, bleſſed be God I can ſpeak this from my own

own experience, and ſay, Faith is to me the ſubſtance of things that are hoped for; Faith is in me, the evidence of things that are not ſeen. If ſo be that your Faith be not grown up to ſuch a pitch and proportion; truly, you are not come into the ſtature that you ſhould attain unto. You have a Faith that looks to promiſes, and lives upon the expectation that begets a kind of hope in you, that ſuch and ſuch things ſhall be done: I, but can you ſay that your Faith is the *ſubſtance* of them, that your Faith is the *evidence* of them, and the *ſubſtance*? Why, your Faith, it is ſuch a Faith, and of ſuch a growth, and it is ſo improved unto ſuch a ſtrength, that things that are but in expectation, they are to your Faith, as if ſo be that they were in actual execution. Your Faith is ſuch a Faith, (I am ſure it ſhould be ſo) that it giv s a being to things that are not in being: it is the Ὑπόςασις, as the Apoſtle uſes the word; it is the ſubſtance, or the ſubſiſtence of things that are hoped for. Why, this is to my Faith, as if it were in actual being. As God made a promiſe to *Abraham*, that he ſhould have a ſon, *Abraham* believes the promiſe: it was long before that promiſe was performed: I, but yet *Abraham*'s Faith did give a ~~hearing~~ being to this promiſe; *Abraham* went on in that confidence, he ſtaggered not at the promiſe, through unbelief, but his Faith was in that ſtrength, that there was, as if there had been a birth already; his Faith gave a being to the promiſe. God made a promiſe to the people, that they ſhould come to the Land of *Canaan*, and that it ſhould be their inheritance. Now, the Faith of *Abraham*, *Iſaack*, and *Jacob*, was the Ὑπόςασις; it gave a being to the promiſe, and they were, as if they had had it while they

liv'd: the actual poſſeſſion of the promiſed Land, they, and their ſeed.

It is *the evidence of things that are not ſeen.* I ſee not, and yet I injoy; I ſee not, and yet I ſee. Faith, where it comes to be well improved, it comes to be the evidence of things that are not ſeen: Things not ſeen, and yet they are as if they were before mine eyes. *Things not ſeen*; Nay, when the contrary is ſeen, as now, a man hath deſtruction before his eyes, and yet his Faith makes him to ſee Salvation; according to that eminent inſtance in *Moſes*; when they came to the Red-Sea, and there was nothing but death, *Fear not*, ſaith he, *ſtand ſtill, and ſee the ſalvation of God*: See it, why, there was nothing to be ſeen, but deſtruction before their eyes; and yet, by Faith, *Moſes* comes to ſee the *Salvation* of God. It is the evidence of things that are not ſeen: O, Brethren, it's a poor Faith, a poor beggerly Faith, (if I may ſo ſpeak of any degree of Faith;) for Faith, in the loweſt degree, is better than all the jewels and diamonds in the World, they are not to be mentioned with it: but, compared with a due improved Faith, truly, it's but a poor beggerly Faith, that depends upon ſenſe. This I would ſee, as *Thomas*; what, ſaith *Thomas*, you report to me, that Jeſus, my Lord and Maſter, is riſen from the dead; but, for my part, unleſs I may ſee him, and feel the print of the nails, and put my hand into his ſide, I will not believe. O, it was an ignoble Faith, a poor beggerly Faith: they will believe no further than they can ſee. Truly, ſuch perſons will hardly believe to the ſaving of their ſouls; and our Saviour, he deals with him about it: O, *Thomas*, *Thomas*, thou haſt ſeen, and believed; but, I tell thee *Thomas*

mas, they are the bleſſed perſons that have not ſeen, and yet believe. Why, it is a noble Faith, for to give a man the evidence of that that he doth not ſee; and this is the Faith that we ſhould preſs after. I ſee nothing that hath a tendency to ſuch or ſuch a mercy, I ſee nothing, but rather the contrary: as in the caſe of *Joſeph*, there's a promiſe concerning his advancement, he ſaies nothing that hath any tendency in it, but rather the contrary; he is caſt into Priſon, and irons enter into his ſoul; he is brought into a miſerable condition, and yet notwithſtanding, his Faith was the evidence of things not ſeen; he could ſee a Golden-Chain, that afterwards he came to wear; he could ſee a Golden-chain in a chain of Iron; the iron entred into his ſoul, and yet the chain of Gold is about his Faith; Faith puts it about the neck, this is the Faith: A Faith of ſuch a growth, that it may evidence to us the things that are not ſeen. Now, I ſay, when we can give an account of ſuch a teſtimony, and come in with the juſtification of experience, and ſay, It's thus teſtified of Faith, and it's a true teſtimony; for my Faith is ſo to me; my Faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, my Faith is the evidence of things that are not ſeen: God hath made a promiſe concerning a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs: He hath made a promiſe of new *Jeruſalem*, that it ſhould come down from heaven, as a Bride made ready for her husband: Now, I ſee nothing to ſuch a purpoſe, I ſee nothing but confuſion; and yet for all that, I can ſee Glory; I can ſee Glory in all the confuſion of the World.

Again, conſider, Secondly, This is the teſtimony thats given of Faith: *I, this is the victory that overcomes*

comes the World, even your Faith. The Apoſtle gives this teſtimony of Faith; 1 Epiſt. of *Joh.* 5. he uſeth theſe words, *This is the victory,* ſaith he, *that overcometh the World, even your Faith.* Why, now conſider, what growth it is that we ſhould preſs after in believing; our duty is, to grow in Grace, in the Grace of Faith; and to grow to ſuch a point and proportion, that our Faith may be our victory: *our Faith,* why, you will ſay, it is our conflict: we have a conflicting Faith: I, but your Faith is your victory; and your Faith ſhould be ſo improved, as that you may be able to give this account of it; my Faith is my victory, and I am more than a Conqueror; as the Apoſtle ſaith in *Rom.* 8. ſaith he, *What ſhall ſeparate, tribulation, diſtreſs, perſecution, famine, nakedneſs, peril, ſword?* Why, ſaith he, *In all theſe things,* he doth not ſay, *after* all theſe things, but, *in* all theſe things; *in perſecution, in tribulation, in diſtreſs, in famine, in nakedneſs,* what, *in ſword!* yea, *in* all theſe things, we are more than Conquerors. This is a marvellous thing, but yet, this is the teſtimony that's given of Faith: and this is that which the Faith of a Believer, if it be duly improved, will ſpring up to, to make the believing ſoul more than a Conqueror: and, *in all* theſe things, this is the victory.—The victory; why, before the battel be done, before the fight be finiſhed, and ended? yet, notwithſtanding, that's a victory that a believing ſoul may, by the ſtrength of his Faith duly improved, he may cry, *Victoria,* even while they are in the fight; yet Victory, Victory: In all theſe things, more than Conquerors. This is the Victory: ſo is a well improved Faith; and ſuch ſhould the Faith of a Believer be, and of ſuch a growth, that it

it ſhould be his Victory. I am hampred with luſts, corruptions, temptations, and heavily preſt with them, and miſerably yoked; and the poor ſoul cryes out with the Apoſtle; O wretched man that I am; what a tedious, wearyſome life have I of it? I cannot be quiet not a day to an end, and yet triumph, and ſay, I thank God, through Jeſus Chriſt; and ſo ſing, *Victoria*: this is the Faith. Theſe things may ſeem to be ſomewhat hard things for Faith: and alas, poor creatures, we are apt to ſtartle at ſuch kind of meaſures, and ſtatures, when they are propounded to us thus to preſs after. But this is the account, that there is ſuch an improvement to be made of it, and ſuch an improvement we ſhould endeavour after, and ſuch a growth, as we may come to this: to have Faith to be our Victory; my Faith is my Victory, and I ſee my Victory in every ſtroke I ſtrike; and this is the growth that we ſhould propound to our ſelves.

Shall I tell you yet further? I am ſignifying to you, that our Faith ſhould be of ſuch a growth, as that it may be, the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen; that it may be the Victory that overcomes the World; while the World ſeems to trample us down under feet, with the ſcorns, and reproaches, and hard uſages of it; yet, a Believer can ſay, I thank God, I have the World more under feet a thouſand times, than I am under it: it ſeems to trample upon me, but I trample upon it: The Apoſtle ſpeaks to that purpoſe; I Glory in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; by which, ſaith he, I am crucified to the World: I, and the World is as much crucified unto me, as I am to it, for its heart; and I can ſet as light

light by it, as it ſets by me: I can ſcorn the ſcorns, and deſpiſe the deſpiſings of the World; and this our Faith will come to; and if we be not a-wanting to our ſelves, I would ſay this to the weakeſt Beleever in the Congregation; his Faith will, and ſhall come to this, To be the evidence of things not ſeen, To be the Victory that overcometh the World.

Yet further, I add this, This is the report and teſtimony that's given to the Faith of a Beleever: By Faith, there hath been the ſubduing of Kingdoms, working righteouſneſs, obtaining promiſes, quenching violence of fire, growing ſtrong out of weakneſs, turning to flight the Armyes of aliens, opening of heaven, binding up of heaven; what not? O, the mighty things that are teſtified to be within the power of Faith, to be obtained! This is the teſtimony that's given of Faith. Now, our Faith ſhould be of ſuch a growth, and ſo improved, that we may be able to juſtifie theſe teſtimonies in our own experience.

By Faith, they ſubdued Kingdoms, ſo the Apoſtle ſpeaks, in *Heb.* 11. What Kingdoms did *Moſes* and *Joſhua* ſubdue by Faith? A Beleevers Faith ſhould be of ſuch a growth, as that it may ſubdue Kingdoms. Truly, he that can ſubdue a kingdom of the Devil within him, may be able to ſubdue all the Kingdoms of the World in a ſpiritual way.

Subdue Kingdoms, and vanquiſh Armies; ſaith *David*, Though 10000 ſhould encamp againſt me, in this will I be confident. Such a Faith as that, it will do wonders, work miracles; ſuch a Faith, as hath a kind of omnipotency in it, and can do all things through God in Chriſt: my Faith in Chriſt

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is that, whereby I am able to do all things: Now, ſuch a Faith we ſhould labour to grow to, as may have ſuch a mighty arm and power, as it is able to carry all before it. That's the ſecond thing.

3. The Faith of a Beleever, it ſhould be of ſuch a growth, as that there may be an anſwering in a practical way, unto thoſe eminent examples of perſons that have been of a well-grown Faith. Conſider what patterns there are.

Abraham, he was a man of Faith; and what was his Faith? what was his pitch, and ſtature, and proportion? I gave you ſomething of account before, but ſhall further expreſs it. *Abraham*, he was a man of ſuch a Faith, as that God teſtified concerning him: O, *Abraham*, he beleeved God, and it was accounted to him for Righteouſneſs. When he had all the difficulties and diſcouragements that could be from reſting upon the promiſe that God had made; yet, ſaith the Text, He beleeved God. God promiſeth to him, that he ſhould have a ſon, though his body was dead, and *Sarahs* body was dead; and, according to nature, there was no poſſibility that things ſhould be brought to paſs: yet *Abraham*, he conſiders neither one thing nor another, but he doth eye the promiſe; hath God ſaid it? It ſhall be done, I ſhall have a ſon, becauſe God hath promiſed me a ſon: and, though I am 100 years old, and *Sarah* 90 years old, yet, God hath ſaid it: there's death in the body, but there's life in the promiſe, and I reſt upon it. It's the promiſe of a faithful God, I will truſt his word. *Abraham* beleeved God, and ſtaggered not at the promiſe through unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving Glory to God; and he becomes the friend of God; he would believe

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any thing that God ſpeaks; and he would perform any thing that God did require; and ſo diſcovered himſelf in the way of his Faith, to be the friend of God. Now, I ſay, ſuch a Faith was *Abrahams*; and what ſhould hinder, but that we ſhould be of ſuch a Faith; Surely, Brethren, this is our duty, to be as good as *Abraham* was: what ſhould hinder? why, have not we as good Goſpel, as good Ordinances, as precious means as ever *Abraham* had? And, what ſhould hinder, but that we ſhould be of as good a Faith as *Abraham* was? Such a Beleever was he, as you heard of, ſtartled at nothing that God had promiſed; but he would beleeve him, and take him at his word.

Such a Beleever was *Moſes*, that (as I told you) he could ſtand up for God, and bear up with a holy confidence concerning his Salvation, when there was nothing but deſtruction before his eyes: *Fear not*, ſaith he, *fear not*; why? there's nothing but matter of fear before us. *Stand ſtill*, why? if we ſtand ſtill, our enemies will be upon the back of us, and confound us: The Egyptians are come out, and are purſuing us with all the ſpight and rage that may be. *And ſee the Salvation of God*; why, we can ſee nothing but deſtruction before us: I, but ſaith *Moſes*, Salvation is before your eyes, and you may, by Faith, ſee, and behold it. Here was a well-improved Faith, and to this pitch ſhould we grow.

O, What a Faith did the woman of *Canaan* diſcover? when, notwithſtanding all the diſcouragements that ſhe had from the Lord Jeſus, one and another, concerning the cauſe ſhe was then in management of; yet, notwithſtanding, ſhe ſticks to him. O, when Chriſt told her he was

was not ſent, but to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*; and it was not meet to take the childrens bread, and caſt it to dogs; and ſhe might reckon upon her ſelf, as a dog: why, I am come for the benefit of the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*, and thou art a *Canaanite*; and what haſt thou to do to make application to me? Yet, notwithſtanding, ſhe ſticks to him, and holds her own, and is reſolved ſhe will not give over till ſhe hath a bleſſing.— Now, mark the teſtimony that Chriſt gives of her; *O woman, great is thy Faith.* Now, here's a pattern for us, that nothing of diſcouragement ſhould beat us off, but that we might bear up with a holy confidence: and, wherefore are theſe things written? but, that we might write after theſe Copies. But we ſtick in principles, and reſt in lower meaſures; and it's a ſhame we are not more in advances, that we do not anſwer Scripture-teſtimonies, nor anſwer Scripture-patterns and examples.

I might inſtance to you in the *Theſſalonian*-Church, a Scripture that formerly I ſpent much time about; O, ſaith he, we are bound to thank God for you, Brethren; for your Faith, it grows exceedingly; it is an over-grown Faith, ὑπερ αυξανει. Thus now ſhould it be with us.

But then there is a fourth thing, which will take up more time than all the reſt. We ſhould endeavour ſuch a growth in Faith, and that in a practical way, as that we may not only anſwer the degrees of Faith, nor the teſtimonies of Faith, and the examples and preſidents of Faith; but fourthly, that we may have ſuch a

Faith

Faith of ſuch a growth, as that we might produce the acts, and the effects of it. And here ſundry particulars there are.

Such a Faith we ſhould have, and of ſuch a growth our Faith ſhould be, that we may come to have clear ſights and apprehenſions of God: to ſay, he is an Inviſible God and who can behold him? and an Infinite Majeſty, and at an infinite diſtance, and who can injoy him? — Who? --- why, a man of a well-improved Faith, may live, as if he were in heaven. The Saints of God, that have had their Faith well improved, have given proof of it, and have been able to give a juſtification of it. I tell you this, that Faith is capable of ſuch an improvement, as that he may live in heaven while he is upon earth, and be in daily converſes with God; ſee him, behold him, and talk with him, as a man would talk with his friend: Faith may come to this; as 'tis ſaid of *Moſes*, he ſaw him that was inviſible. *Enoch*, by his Faith, could walk with God every day, as a man with his friend. And ſo a Believer may walk with God, and converſe with God, even in the management of his worldly affairs; he may run up to heaven, and ſpeak with God, and Jeſus Chriſt, and have a holy familiarity with God, and have ſweet thoughts of God. O, comfortable thoughts, the meditation of God! O, ſweet unto him, as the Prophet ſpeaks in the 104 *Pſal. my meditations of him ſhall be ſweet.* He is a *terrible* God, I, but I can *meditate terror.* The Faith of a Beleever duly improved, and being of a light growth; it will make him able to meditate terror, and to think of the terrible things of God, the terrible acts of God, the terribleneſs of Gods Majeſty: Indeed, there is a

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terribleneſs in Gods Majeſty; I, but the Faith of a Beleever, being duly improved, and of a due growth; it will be able to meditate terror, as the Prophet hath the expreſſion, in *Iſa.* 39. and ſo to injoy ſweet communion with God in every daies courſe: it is, as if there were no diſtance, but heaven and earth were in a very contiguity, and they were juſt neer, cloſe together; there is, as it were, but a wall between heaven and earth. O, he can be, as a man would be with his next neighbour, that, knock at the wall, and your neighbour hears you, and you can talk together day and night. And ſo, the Faith of a Beleever is capable of ſuch a growth, as he may come to enjoy God, and ſweet communion with God.

And ſo, of Chriſt; when we make him not only the object of our deſires, but the object of our claim: he is my Jeſus, and as much mine, as any mans in the World. We ſhould not only breath out after Chriſt, but that we may bear up with a holy confidence, and make a bold claim of intereſt in him, and ſay, I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine. I bear upon it, I challenge an intereſt in him; and I will diſpute the caſe with any that ſhall come in in a way of oppoſition to me. He loved ſinners, He loved the World, He loveth me. He gave himſelf for ſinners, He hath given himſelf for me; He is as much my Chriſt as any mans in the World. This is the well-grown Faith,

SERM. IV.

LOok to your growth in Faith, that you be not weak in it; and let it appear this way: See to it, that you have ſuch a Faith, ſo improved, of ſuch a growth, that you may be able at once to appeal from the Law, as a ridged exacter, and yet to apply to the Law, as a gracious, wiſe, and holy director. When Faith comes to be planted in the ſoul, it is not therefore planted, that the heart ſhould, upon the coming in of Faith, turn head againſt the Law: No, not againſt the Law. Indeed, it was never in the heart of God, that Beleevers, that are brought off from the Law, as a covenant of works, and are dead to it, by the body of Chriſt, ſhould have their hearts ſet againſt it, that they ſhould riſe up in oppoſition to it, and be poſſeſt with prejudices againſt it: No, God forbid it ſhould be ſo. I ſpeak of the Law, conſidered as a covenant of works. True it is, the Faith of a Beleever carries him from the Law; ſo, as not to reſt upon it; ſo, as not to ſeek righteouſneſs by it; but yet withal, while it doth make an appeal from the Law, as a ridged exactor, and was made, before Grace appeared, to tremble and quake at the conſideration of it, as a fiery Law: while he looks upon it as a moſt ſevere, and ridged exctor, and quits it, appeals from it; yet, the Faith of a Beleever, duly improved, will own the ſame Law, as it is a wiſe, righteous, and holy director. And that Law and Covenant, which out of the hand of Faith was, and would have been a ſtinging Serpent, as the Rod of *Moſes*, when it was out of his hand, a ſtinging ſerpent, and ſuch as would make a man to flye from the preſence of, in regard

gard of its ſtinging power: yet, the very ſame Law in the hand of Faith, as it is a rule of Righteouſneſs, it is a rod in the hand, and of precious uſe: and this is that wherein the growth of Faith will diſcover it ſelf; when we can thus judiciouſly manage the apprehenſions of the Law, ſo as to appeal from it, and yet to apply to it: To rejoyce in a freedom from it, and from its ſeverity; and yet rejoyce in holding a complyance, and correſpondency with it, as it is a gracious, holy rule, that God hath given us to conform unto. And this is another thing which I offer to you, to be judiciouſly conſidered of, that you may ſhew forth the growth of your Faith in this way.

Yet further, grow in Grace, grow in Faith; and how ſhall it appear? --- Thus, grow in Faith, ſo as, that while you remember former guilts, deep and dreadful guilts, that have been contracted upon you; while, upon review of former curſed carriages and practices; upon review, and upon reflection: you can remember deep contracted guilt upon your conſciences, under which, it may be, you labour, as under an unſupportable burden: yet, at that very time, when the remembrance of former dreadful guilt contracted, is reviv'd; yet you can, at the very ſame time, bear up with a holy confidence towards God, upon the account of that rich and glorious Grace which hath appeared by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; — while with freedom, and as becomes a Goſpel-ſpirit of ingenuity, you can draw up a charge againſt your ſelves, and ſay, I was a Perſecuter, (as *Paul* ſpeaks) I was a Blaſphemer, I was Injurious, I was a notorious Drunkard, I was a prophane, curſed

ſed Swearer, I was helliſhly vitious; thus and thus I was, and thus and thus I do acknowledge: I remember well how the caſe ſtood with me, what a curſed courſe I took, and how I run on in the rode to hell & deſtruction, without any fear & controul, & how faſt I was ripening for hell and deſtruction: I remember this, and yet I can remember it without deſpondency; I can't remember it without a breaking and bleeding ſoul, to think that ever I ſhould carry it ſo towards the Lord; and yet withal, I can bear up in a rejoycing ſpirit, upon the account of ſuper-abounding Grace. While you can charge your ſelves ſo, as it may be none in the World can make the like charge upon you: Yet notwithſtanding, you can make a bold challenge, and ſay with the Apoſtle, in *Rom.* 8. who ſhall lay any thing to my charge? This is an excellent thing, and an argument of a well-improved, and well-grown Faith, when it comes to this: and indeed, it is no other than a Faith of good growth, that will inable to this. Poor weaklings in Faith and Grace, when they come to remember their former curſed carriage; O, how apt to fall under deepeſt deſpondencies, and to be poſſeſt with horror and aſtoniſhment, and to be diſputing againſt themſelves, and concerning their eſtate; and ready to conclude, alas, how is it poſſible, that ever ſuch a miſerable miſcreant as I, ſhould find Grace to releeve me? favour with God, forgiveneſs of ſins? Surely, this burden will ſink my ſoul; this guilt will preſs me down to hell, ſuch deep and dreadful guilt; O, ſuch ſtains upon my conſcience, what can fetch them out? what plaiſter broad enough to cover ſuch ſores? what price great enough to pay ſuch debts? A poor weakling in Faith, is apt

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to argue thus, to the ſinking, and over-whelming of his ſpirit. But, it is the Faith that is well-grown, that will inable the ſoul at this ſame time, eying guilt, and eying Grace; ſeeing the Plague, and ſeeing the plaiſter; and taking knowledge of the ſuper abundance of the Grace of Chriſt above his contracted guilt; for to bear up with a holy confidence, and (as I ſaid before) to charge, and challenge; to charge it ſelf, and yet challenge the accuſer, and ſay, who ſhall be able to lay any thing unto my charge? I know whom I have beleeved, I know whither I have fled for refuge, I know where I have anchored, I know upon what foundation I have built my hope and confidence upon; here's the well-grown Faith, a Faith which will give the greateſt Glory to God: When a man can look upon all the evils that ever were committed by him, with a melting, diſſolving ſoul; yet notwithſtanding, bear up with boldneſs, and ſay, I, but I know, that not any thing of this, ſhall ever be laid to my charge; and, I know whom I have believed. Will you but weigh theſe things, and conſider of them, and know, that this is the Faith which we are to preſs after.

And ſo, (which follows upon the former) ſuch a growth in Faith ſhould we preſs after, as that, while we ſee the corruptions that are in us, and ſadly complain of the preſſures under which we lye, and how miſerably we are yoked while we do ſo; and ſee cauſe to cry out with the Apoſtle, O wretched man that I am; --- by reaſon of what?-- by reaſon of a law in my members rebelling againſt the law of my mind: O miſerable wretch! what darkneſs is in my underſtanding? what

perverſneſs in my will? what inordinacy in my affections? what a crabbed, perverſe nature have I? O, what a rebelling ſoul is there in me? when I would do good, evil is preſent; and ſo the poor ſoul labours, and makes ſad complaints and moans in the ears of God: yet notwithſtanding, at the ſame time, can ſay, with the Apoſtle; but, though it be thus, yet, bleſſed be God, I thank God, through Jeſus Chriſt, though I ſerve, with my fleſh, the law of ſin; yet, with my ſpirit, I ſerve the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: though there be a rebelling law, yet I find another law, a law in my mind, that makes oppoſition to that rebelling law; and I find principles of Grace and Holineſs, acting moſt vigorouſly in oppoſition to thoſe principles: And, though they tugg, and wreſtle, and ſtruggle with me, yet I am utterly ſet againſt complyance with them, and am reſolv'd upon this, that I will never make any league with them; but i'll do the utmoſt I can for to ruine them, to be the death of them: I thank God, through Jeſus Chriſt. This is now the Faith that we ſhould preſs after; that we may thus bear up with courage and reſolution; and while we ſee our own blemiſhes, yet we can rejoyce, to think what a beauty is upon us, through Jeſus Chriſt. We can ſee blemiſhes, and yet we can ſee perfection of beauty, that we are made comely, through the comelyneſs which by Grace is put upon us.

Then again, ſuch a growth in Faith our duty is to preſs after, and to endeavour to, as that we may be able to ſay, I am never more fearful to ſin againſt God, than when I am leaſt fearful for to be condemned by God. O, it's a bleſſed proof of a well-grown Faith; and ſuch a Faith ſhould we endeavour

deavour to; and a Faith of ſuch a growth, that we may ſay, Through the Grace of God, I can ſay, I am moſt fearful to ſin, and to do any thing that's diſpleaſing to God; --- and when ſo, --- O, eſpecially then, when I am leaſt fearful to be puniſhed, and plagued for it. The leſs I have of the fear of hell and damnation, and the more I have of a holy confidence towards God, that I ſhall be everlaſtingly ſaved; the more am I fearful with a holy, filial fear, to do any thing that may be diſpleaſing to my God; here's the well-grown Faith; and it argues much feebleneſs in the Faith of a Chriſtian, and it gives occaſion to, ſometimes to queſtion the truth of it: When perſons, upon the apprehenſion of their juſtified ſtate, they are ready to take liberty to ſin. You know how the Apoſtle argues againſt this; Shall we continue in ſin, becauſe Grace hath abounded? God forbid. Nay, the Faith of a Beleever well improved, will fortifie his ſpirit againſt ſuch a temptation, and againſt the aſſaults of the Devil and corruption, and ſay, Seeing the Grace of God hath appeared to me, and magnified it ſelf upon me in a pardoning way, in a renewing way; that Grace I reckon upon, as that that ſhall abide upon me, and ſhall ingage it ſelf to perfect all the concerns, Juſtification, Sanctification, everlaſting Salvation: this makes a holy fear to flouriſh in my ſoul, that I may not in any thing carry it unbecomingly, and unſuitably to ſuch a ſtate. This is the well-grown Faith that we ſhould preſs after.

Yet further, when I preſs you to a growth in Grace, and eſpecially, in the Grace of Faith; thus you ſhall be able to judge of it. We ſhould endeavour to be of ſuch a growth, as that, whatſo-

ever Grace is implanted in us, and to what degree ſoever; whatſoever our accompliſhments are in the renewed ſtate, and according to the new creature; whatſoever there is of inherent Grace, and of gracious abilities; yet we can ſo look upon our inherent Graces, and ſpiritual Abilities, as to keep off from placing any confidencee in them, but ſtill keep a full relyance upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. This is our duty, that whatſoever is of Grace inherent in us, yet, that it be not truſted unto. Grace in the ſoul, is but a creature; 'tis one of the beſt pieces indeed of all Gods creation that ever were made by him; yet it is but a creature, and being a creature, it is not to be truſted: A man muſt not truſt in his ~~truſt~~ faith, he muſt truſt with his Faith, but he muſt not truſt to his Faith: he muſt not truſt to any ſpiritual ſtrength or abilities that he hath in him, but ſtill keep a dependence upon Chriſt: reckon upon Chriſt, as the ſtrength that will be ſufficient for him. It was the anſwer that was given to *Paul*, when he was under thoſe ſore buffetings; ſaith he, *Paul*, My Grace is ſufficient for thee. *Paul*'s Grace was not ſufficient any further, than it was made ſufficient by Chriſt's Grace. It is not the water in the Ciſtern, that will ſerve the turn, but the water in the Fountain: dependance upon the Ciſtern, will be found to be a vain thing; the Ciſtern may be exhauſted, but the Fountain cannot. You know how it was with *Adam*, when he had the Grace of Creation, it fail'd him. *Peter*, when he was ſtrong in himſelf, you know what his confidence in himſelf iſſued in; and therefore, I ſay, ſuch confidences, even in our own Graces, are to be accurſed: the Lord rejects ſuch confidences, and ſo ſhould we. We

ſhould uſe our Graces, but truſt not to them, but ſtill keep a dependance upon the Lord Jeſus; according to the Apoſtles charge to *Timothy*, *Be thou ſtrong in the Grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus*: And truly, this is that that will not be performed, but by a well-grown Faith: when we can thus do, ſee the Grace of God in us, prize it, bleſs him for it; imploy it, make uſe of it, and yet notwithſtanding, keep hands off from it, from truſting upon it; and keep a full dependance upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; that's another thing.

Again, grow in Grace, grow in Faith, 'tis your duty; — and to what purpoſe? to ſuch a purpoſe, that while we do, and perform duties with greateſt delight, as indeed, Faith will carry us to that; it will make a man delight in the Law of God, and in the waies of Holineſs, and performance of holy duties, account it meat and drink to be in the practice of them; yet, while we are in the performance of duty, that even then, when we have done, to lay them by, and ſay, this is not my foundation, O Lord, I have done thus and thus. It may be, much in preaching, much in prayer, much in alms, much in acts of mortification, much in ſuch and ſuch ſervices: I, but Lord, when I have done all; I do profeſs, that I have done nothing to purpoſe, nothing to my juſtification; I ſo do duties as if I were to be juſtified by them; yet I ſo truſt upon Chriſt, as if I were not to meddle with my duty at all: O, this is precious Faith, and well-improved Faith, when we can do ſervice and duty to God; and yet, when we have done all, we can take off from all, lay all at the feet of Jeſus, and ſay, O Lord, this ſhall never be my Righteouſneſs; I will endeavour to be as righteous, and holy,

holy, and gracious as I can; but, Lord, when I have done all I can, I am reſolved to lay all by, and will make mention of thy righteouſneſs, and of thine only; and, I am reſolved, I will never plead any righteouſneſs of my own, any duties and ſervices of my performance, I will never plead them before thee, as my Righteouſneſs; I may plead them as *evidences*, as *Hezekiah* doth; *Remember Lord, how I have walk'd before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart*; but I will never plead them as my righteouſneſs, which I will ſtick to, and bear upon them before the tribunal of God; no, I will throw them all away, when they offer themſelves to come in upon ſuch an account. Alas poor, weak Beleevers! O, how apt are they to keep hands upon their duties and ſervices; and when a day of temptation, and diſſertion, and perplexity begins to ſeize upon them, they begin to turn their eyes to what they have been, and done: I, but the Faith of a Beleever, when it comes to its due growth, will otherwiſe carry the ſoul, and make it to keep its dependance upon the Lord Jeſus.

Again, your duty is to grow in Grace, and eſpecially in Faith; and ſuch a growth, as that while you give attendance upon an Ordinance, you can ſee the authority of God ſtamp'd upon it; and upon the account of that authority which is ſtamp'd, you give the attendance, and you reckon upon it as a bleſſed expedient which God hath provided for your ſouls advantage; and you reckon upon gracious communications from God by it, as by ſuch an expedient of his own appointment; you reckon upon it, and come to it with ſuch a perſwaſion; O, this is Gods appointing, and in this way hath he ordered

ordered that I ſhould wait upon him, and I know his appointments are not in vain; therefore I reſt not in the Ordinance, but look to the God of the Ordinance; and I follow after the injoyment of God in his Ordinances: 'tis nothing to me to have the word preached, other Ordinances diſpenced, they are nothing to me, without the injoyment of God: I look upon God in them, and I expect a bleſſing from God by them: truly, this is an argument of a well-grown Faith. Alaſs poor weaklings that we are, we come in a formal manner, (too commonly ſo) and with too much of a carnal frame of ſpirit, too much in a complemental way, look upon an Ordinance as if there were no more to be reckoned to it, than what of ſtrength, and duty, and benefit of man can put upon it, look to the inſtrument, & have not an eye to God: O, without queſtion, Beloved, our preaching would be to better purpoſe, and our hearing and praying, and our eating and drinking at the Lords Table, would be to better purpoſe, and with more fruit and benefit. If we could look more to God in an Ordinance, and come with ſuch a thought as this, O Lord, this is the way that thou haſt laid out for me to wait upon thee in, theſe are the means that thou haſt appointed to do my ſoul good by, and upon this account, becauſe they are thy appointments; I apply to them, and expect benefit and profit by them. Now, I ſay, when we manage our attendance in ſuch a manner, we are then in the faireſt way to have the fruit and benefit of them: and how will this be, but by a well-improved Faith? & the truth on't is, the ſtrength of Faith, and the growth and increaſe of Faith, will very much diſcover it ſelf this way. When we come to appear before

before God in Ordinances, we have ſuch a Faith as carries us to God. Why, I have been with God this day, I have been in the preſence of God, I look upon theſe Ordinances as the bleſſed Symboles of his preſence, and uppon that account it is, that I attend them, and expect from them.

And then again, I preſs you, that you would grow in Grace, and grow in the Grace of Faith: --- why, what growth would you require? --- ſuch a growth as this; that your Faith may come to be of ſuch a growth, that you may not be ſtaggered concerning the promiſes of God, how croſs ſoever that providences ſeem to run to them: O, this is a proof of a well-grown Faith. You know, that its an ordinary thing with God, in the courſe of his dealings and diſpenſations, when he hath made a promiſe, and put his people upon the hopes, and expectation of having it performed, to order out ſo in the courſe of his providence, as if he would quite null his promiſe: the providences ſeem to ſpeak flat contradiction to the promiſe. It was *Abrahams* caſe; a promiſe he had of a ſon, but the providence of God ordered it out, that he runs out till he be 100 years old, and *Sarah* was old to; ſo that there was an impoſſibility, as to nature, that ever there ſhould be ſuch a thing brought to paſs; and here was now the temptation: Now, if *Abraham* had been but of a weak Faith, how apt had he been to be ſtaggering, and ſorely ſhaken, as touching the promiſe; ſurely, this will never be; I, but being of a well-grown Faith, as the Apoſtle teſtifies of him, he conſidered not his own body, nor the deadneſs of *Sarahs* womb; he ſtaggered not at the promiſe through unbelief, but being

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ſtrong in Faith, he gave Glory to God.—So the Lord dealt with *Joſeph*; but the word of the Lord tries him, and while it tries him, he truſts upon it: the irons enter into his ſoul, and by that providence: O, what a ſeeming contradiction was there to the promiſe? he that was deſigned to wear a chain of Gold about his neck, muſt go with chains of Irons about his legs, and thoſe irons muſt enter into his ſoul. What doth this ſpeak, but the vanity of the promiſe, and that it was a thing not to be reckoned upon, no account to be made of it? and yet notwithſtanding, he being of a well-improved Faith, under all theſe croſs providences, that ſpake contradiction to the promiſe; yet he keeps in a humble dependance upon God. And while the word of the Lord tried him, he truſts the word; he did not try the word, but he truſted the word, and ſo being of a well-grown Faith, he bears up with a holy confidence towards God, as touching the things that he had promiſed.

And ſo likewiſe, promiſes concerning the Church of God, and a more bleſſed injoyment that Saints ſhall have in the World; God hath ingaged himſelf by promiſe very much to ſuch a purpoſe; and providences do ſeem to give the lye to the promiſe; and things are ordered out, as if ſuch things ſhould never be brought to paſs: Now, a poor, weak Beleever, he will be apt to give all for naught, and to conclude, as *David* did, I ſaid in my haſte, all men are lyars; theſe are but vain words: we ſpeak of this and that, of a new *Jeruſalem* coming down from Heaven, as a Bride made ready for her husband, and of the Churches Glory and beauty, and of *Babilons* downfal; and

Yet

yet *Babilon* ſits as a Queen, and ſaith, I ſhall never ſee ſorrow nor widowhood: Now, a poor, weak Beleever, will be ready to give up the account, and to ſay, We muſt never look for theſe things; I, but a ſtrong Beleever, it bears up the ſoul in a holy confidence towards God: well, let God take what courſe he will, I am ſure that the womb of the promiſe ſhall never be found to be a miſcarrying womb; that's another thing.

Yet further, I preſs you to growth in Grace, particularly to a growth in Faith, that you may not, upon every occaſion, be caſt into a diſcompoſure of ſpirit, upon every occaſion of trouble that you meet withal: when there are ſuch providences ordered out, as are ſtartling, and amazing, and aſtoniſhing; ſuch a Faith you are to preſs to: that when ſinners in *Zion* are afraid, and fearfulneſs ſurpriſeth the hypocrites; — and likewiſe, when poor, weak Beleevers are apt to tremble and quake, and at a loſs, and know not what to do; that you may come to ſay, my heart is fixed, I truſt in God, theſe things move me not: this is an argument of a well-grown Faith; when we are not upon every occaſion of any ſudden fears, in a diſcompoſure of ſpirit, yet well-grown Faith will bring a fixedneſs. I, it's an argument of a Faith not well improved, and not of ſo good a growth as it ſhould be, when we are upon, every occaſion, ſurpriſed with fear, and horror, and aſtoniſhment, and ready to ſcatter this way and that way, and know not what to do. I refer to that paſſage in the 107 *Pſal.* his heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord, he ſhall not be moved for any evil tidings; when a man can ſay, as the Prophet in the *Pſalm*, which is reckoned to *Luther*, becauſe of his making ſo much uſe of it; God

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is our refuge and ſtrength, a preſent help in the time of trouble; we will not fear, though the mountains be troubled, and though all things be in a confuſion; the Lord of Hoſts is with us, and the God of *Jacob* is our refuge: this is the Faith we ſhould endeavour to, and Faith of ſuch a growth, we ſhould preſs after.

Again, ſuch a Faith, as in a day of affliction and tribulation, we may live; I, and live cheerly and comfortably, I, and in a full condition. The juſt ſhall live by Faith, and the juſt ſhall live in fulneſs, if ſo be that Faith be but of a due growth. I am come, that ye might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly: and the more we improve in Faith, the more abundantly we ſhall live, and at a higher rate. Be full in emptineſs,— be rich in poverty,— be ſtrong in weakneſs,— be free under reſtraint; and let the condition be what it will, by having a well-grown Faith, we ſhall but ſeem to be afflicted, when others reckon upon it that we are moſt really afflicted. O, 'tis a notable paſſage, that of the Apoſtle, in 2 *Cor.* 6. ſaith he, we are as unknown, and yet well known; — as dying, and behold we live; — as chaſtened, and not kill'd; — as ſorrowful, yet alwaies rejoycing; — as poor, yet making many rich; — as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things. I confeſs, it is a moſt wonderful thing, and yet this is that that a well-grown Faith will inable to. That when a child of God is in the loweſt condition, and, according to the judgement of others, the moſt really miſerable man (mark what I ſay) that can be in the World: Yet notwithſtanding, he can give this account, I am but, as it were, thus and thus: this is the noble act of Faith. *Sorrowful*, O, you are a

company of ſorrowful, poor creatures; nay, ſaith the Apoſtle, we are but, as ſorrowful: O, you are *miſerably poor, and beggerly*; nay, ſaith he, miſtake not, we are but, *as* poor: indeed, we *are* rich: you take us to be the moſt ſorrowful, and poor miſerable creatures in the World; we are indeed *as* ſuch, we ſeem to be ſo, and you take us to be ſo; you take us to be ſuch *as have nothing, as having nothing*, and yet, ſaith he, *we poſſeſs all things*. Why, what a wonderful thing is this, that the Faith of a Beleever ſhould carry to this? and yet this a well-improved Faith will inable to; and by this we are to diſcover, that it is a well-grown Faith. Saith the Apoſtle, *I have learned in every eſtate, therewith to be content; I can be full, and be hungry; I can abound, and ſuffer want*: Suffer want! I, ſaith he, I can reckon of a *fulneſs* in my *want*! *I have all, and abound*: what a bleſſed thing was this? And O, how much precioufneſs is there in the Grace of Faith! and ſuch a Faith ſhould we endeavour to attain to, and of ſuch a growth, that we may bear up with rejoycing hearts in tribulation; in all tribulations, and in the want of all things, make our boaſt, and ſay, with the Prophet, in *Hab.*3. Though the Figg-tree ſhall not bloſſome, and the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, no Calves in the ſtall, no Graſs in the field, nor Corn in the ground, no Money in the purſe, no Bread in the cubbord, every Brook is dry, and every Prop and Pillar is pluck'd away; yet, ſaith he, notwithſtanding all this, I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

SERM.

SERM. V.

SAints and Beleevers, are called *Trees of Righteouſneſs: The Planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.* (I wiſh that this word may not only ſound in our ears, but ſink into our hearts; are they the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified? How is it ever like, that God ſhould be glorified by ſuch a plantation, if ſo be that his planted ones ſtand at a ſtay, and do not make ſome conſiderable growth, anſwerable to time, and means, and opportunities to ſuch a purpoſe. We are therefore to know, that it is as much our duty for to grow in Grace, as it is to be made partakers of it.

I have been ſpeaking to you concerning growth in *Faith*; but what was delivered, I ſhall ~~leſs~~ paſs, having ſome further addition to make: ſomething yet further this morning to offer out unto your conſideration; which, if the Lord be pleaſed to accompany with his Grace, and the working of his mighty ſpirit, will be beneficial to us, to the promoting of this cauſe that I now am ingaged in.

You that are Beleevers, that have the Faith of Gods Elect; your duty is to grow in Faith: Now, do but weigh, and conſider, and take heed, that a deceived heart do not turn us aſide. It will appear, that there is a growing in Faith, when we come to have a large capacity for the entertaining of the Goſpel-myſteries; when the myſterie of the Goſpel, and of Godlineſs, comes to ſtand in its

proportion, in our hearts and underſtendings; when we have our hearts widened, and inlarged, to take in the myſterie of the Goſpel, ſo as that we have not only ſome weak, low apprehenſions of it, which a ſmaller meaſure of Faith will inable to; but, when we come to have a comprehenſiveneſs of heart, ſo, as that we can expaſiate and inlarge our ſelves in our meditations, of the glorious myſterie, which, by the Goſpel, is made known unto us: When we come to walk (as it were) in the length, and in the breadth of this myſterie; we can come to view, and ſurveigh all that glorious workmanſhip of God, which he hath wrought, in order to the ſalvation of poor ſouls: we cannot only darkly apprehend, but clearly behold the infinite wiſdom, and love, and Grace, that hath appeared to us in the contrivance of this great deſign, concerning the ſalvation of ſinners. Truly, this will be a clear proof, and demonſtration of a growth in Faith; when our Faith takes in much of God, much of Chriſt, much of the miſtery; that we can diſcourſe of it judiciouſly, and affectionately, and ſolace our ſelves in the contemplation of it; we can with open face behold the glory of God, as it ſhines in the face of Chriſt; we can walk up and down in the length and breadth of the myſterie of the Goſpel. O, this is a bleſſed proof, and will be found to be ſo, of a ſouls improvement, and growth in Faith, and in Grace: Will you but conſider of this; when the Goſpel, and the myſterie of it, the myſterie of Election, Redemption, Juſtification, Reconciliation of a ſinner to God; the myſterie of Grace, as it ſtands in oppoſition to the works of the Law; the myſterie of the everlaſting Covenant, which is ordered in all things, and ſure; when

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it is not penn'd up, but hath ſcope in our underſtandings; when we can take in this myſterie of the new Covenant in the proportions of it; this is the buſineſs of Faith; but it is that which will not be performed to any good purpoſe, unleſs there be ſome conſiderable improvement, and growth in Faith; and therefore it is, that the Apoſtle doth ſo earneſtly pray on the behalf of the Church of *Epheſus*, in *Eph.* 1. ſaith he, *I ceaſe not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the ſpirit of Wiſdom and Revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your underſtandings being inlightned, that you may know what is the hope of his Calling, and what the riches of the Glory of his inheritance in the Saints; and what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power.* O, how earneſt was the Apoſtle, in the behalf of the *Epheſians*, to this purpoſe, and Chap. 3. ver. 14. ſaith he, *I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he would grant unto you according to the riches of his Glory, to be ſtrengthened with might by his ſpirit in the inward man, that Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by Faith*: and, (ſaith he) *that you may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length and depth, and height; and to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge that you might be filled with all the fulneſs of God*: Two paſſages they are of Scripture, which are moſt proper for beleeving ſouls to be well ſtudied in: that part which I read to you, out of the firſt Chapt. and this in the third: I ſay, they are of ſome proper cogniſance for men and women; that being brought over to the Faith of the Gof-

pel, are ſtudious of approving themſelves unto the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; that they may anſwer their duty concerning theſe things that are here made mention of; that there might be (not only as I ſaid before) a weak, and dim, and dark apprehenſion of the myſterie of the Goſpel, the myſterie of Chriſt, the myſterie of the hope of Glory; but, that there might be a *comprehenſion*; that the myſterie may ſtand full, and as much as may be, compleat in us, in all the proportions of it; that the Goſpel might not be ſtreightned in our underſtandings. Truly friends, this is a great matter, if you would but ſet your hearts upon it, and ſeriouſly weigh, and ponder what I drive now. Alas, how little is there of the myſterie of the Goſpel, that our hearts have already received? how little of it? And by this means, God is ſcanted, and ſhortened in the love, praiſe, and honour, that is due to him, and which our hearts would be inlarged to yield up, if we were but more careful to anſwer our duty this way. I do profeſs, this morning, to you, that are partakers of the Faith of Gods Elect, that are able to give any account of any ſaving work upon your hearts, and that you have any thing of the Faith of the Goſpel in you: I do profeſs here, and teſtifie to you, in the Name of the Lord, that this doth more neerly concern you for to look unto, that theſe two Scriptures may be better anſwered by you; that you do not pleaſe your ſelves in that ſtreightneſs of ſpirit that is in you, and diſcovers it ſelf; but, that you be ſo heightned, that there be ſuch an inlargement of heart in believing, that you may take in the myſterie in the Glories of it, or elſe you will not ſo duly anſwer that which is required of you, as touching

ing your growth in Faith, and Grace: Think what you will of it, this I am ſure is a duty that lyes upon Beleevers to perform, that they be of comprehenſive ſpirits, and that they labour to work out to a more inlargedneſs of heart; that they may be ſo inabled to comprehend, with all the Saints, the height, and depth, and breadth, and length, or elſe you will never be able to give that glory to God, and honour to Chriſt; never be ſo much in admirings of the glorious myſterie of the Goſpel, as otherwiſe you would. I would you would a little think of this point; and, for my part, I do profeſs, I know nothing that is more proper for a Miniſter of the Goſpel, a Diſpencer of the Myſteries of God, to be more earneſt in preſſing, and urging upon Beleevers, than this very thing is: But alas, how low ſpirited are moſt Beleevers. Beleevers, that it may be have got as much Faith as wil ſecure them from Hell, and bring them to Heaven: But, as for the myſteries in the glories of it, in the dimentions of it, in the latitude of it; O, how uncapable of a due apprehenſion of it: Will you therefore but conſider of this? this is one thing, I, it is, it is that which doth mainly concern thoſe that have any thing of the Faith of the Goſpel in them, for to be very ſolicitous about, and ſtudious to be anſwerable to. I leave it with you; but know, that the great God of Heaven, and our Lord Jeſus, hath laid this burden upon you and me this morning: As many of us, as are able to give an account of the Faith of the Goſpel, the Lord Jeſus laies this burden upon you this morning, that you look to it, that there be a comprehenſiveneſs of ſpirit concerning the myſterie of the Goſpel; which is Chriſt

in you, the hope of Glory. And ſo I let it paſs; I leave it with you, to be ſtudied, and pondered upon; and as you will anſwer it to Chriſt another day. Take heed, that this particular, among the reſt, be not ſlightly paſſed over.

Again, your duty is, to grow in Grace and Faith, and ſo will you make it appear that you do grow. When you come to have ſuch a Faith, as is not only a living Faith, but a lively Faith, an active, ſtirring Faith within you; when you come to have ſuch a Faith, as that you do not only live by it, but that you live richly by it: there's many a man that lives, and gets a livelyhood; he hath bread for the day, he hath to ſupply his neceſſities, but he lives at a low, poor rate; he is not able to riſe up to thoſe expences that others are able to bear. So there are (I ſay) many Beleevers; they live, they get bread for the day; they get a ſubſiſtence by their Faith; but they live poorly, at a low rate, they do not keep a good houſe, they do not ſpend like rich men. There are that are rich in Faith, as the Apoſtle uſes the expreſſion, in the ſecond Epiſt. of *James*, that are *rich in Faith*; that's it that we ſhould preſs to, to ſuch a growth in Faith, that we may live like rich men, keep a good houſe, and maintain a full table; that we may feed highly from day to day: there is mention of the rich man in the Goſpel, that was clothed in Purple, and fared deliciouſly every day: thus it might have been, and yet the man not culpable, if he had fared thus with a heavenly mind, and had not ſet his heart upon theſe things, as if they were the only portion for ſouls to ſit down ſatisfied withal. No doubt, God doth allow perſons, that have a larger portion of the World than others have, to go better

ter clad, and to feed at a higher rate than others do, that have not ſuch eſtate. This man, it's ſaid, he was clothed in Purple, and fared deliciouſly every day: why, truly Brethren, there are ſuch Beleevers to be found, though, I think, the number of them is very ſmall: there are ſuch, of whom it may be thus teſtified, and it is an honourable teſtimony of them, that they are clothed in Purple, in Scarlet, and they fare deliciouſly every day; they go clothed in Princely Robes, they are clothed in the Scarlet Robe of Jeſus Chriſt, in the Robe of Righteouſneſs, which hath been died in his own blood; and they walk like Princes Sons and Daughters, and they fare deliciouſly every day; they keep a continual feaſt, feed upon the marrow and fatneſs of the Goſpel; they rejoyce in hope of the glory of God: theſe are the perſons of a well-grown Faith, and it is their honour ſo to be; thus they live: Thus to bear up in pomp and ſtate, to live like Kings children, and for to ſpend largely, knowing that their eſtate will bear them out. They have ſuch a Faith in Chriſt, and in the Covenant, as will bring in ſufficient to defray their expences from day to day, that they ſhall never be at a loſs, they have that which will make a ſupply to them: this is the Faith, and theſe are the perſons that are rich in Faith. Now, ſuch a growth in Faith, is our duty to preſs after, as that we may be able, not only to live, but that we may live at a high rate, feed fully, and largely, and be feaſted upon Chriſt, feaſted upon the Promiſes, the bleſſings of the Covenant; feeding upon the hope of the Glory that ſhall be revealed, feeding to the full, without any fear of a ſurfeit: This is the well-grown Faith, and ſuch a Faith, Brethren and Friends, we are to preſs after.

Such a Faith is not only a conflicting, but it is a conquering, and a triumphing Faith; this is the well-grown Faith; that they may not only be able to give this account of themſelves, that they have a Faith which inables them to fight with corruptions, and luſts, and to grapple with Principalities, and Powers; but ſuch a Faith, as inables them to bear up in a triumphing way; and to ſay, In all theſe things, in tribulation, in diſtreſs, in perſecution, in famine, in nakedneſs, (as I ſaid in a former Exerciſe:) In all theſe things, we are more than Conquerors, through him that hath loved us. When we can ſay, with the Apoſtle rejoycingly, O, bleſſed be God, as in 2 *Cor.* 2. that maketh us alwaies to triumph in Chriſt, ſuch a Faith we ſhould preſs after, that may inable us to bear up, to live at a high rate, and to bear up with holy Rejoycings and Triumphings in God. Such a Faith as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, in 1. *Pet.* 1. having not ſeen, you love him; and beleeving, you rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of Glory. Will you conſider of this now, as a further addition to all the reſt? Grow in Faith, ſo grow, as that the myſterie of the Goſpel may ſtand in its full proportion; that you may be able to comprehend, with all the Saints, the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, that the Goſpel-myſterie may not be ſtreightned in your ſpirits.— So grow in Faith, as that you may live high, and may maintain your ſelf in an honourable, and creditable manner; that you may live like the child of the great King of Heaven and Earth; that you may feed upon delicacies every day; that you may come to be filled by beleeving, with all joy, and peace, and comfort; that you may ſuck, and be ſatisfied with

with the breaſts of Conſolation: This is the Faith that we ſhould endeavour a growing in.

I add yet further; you that are partakers of the Faith of the Goſpel, your duty is, to grow in Grace and Faith; and ſo ſhall it appear that you do, when you can bear up with fixed, and eſtabliſhed, and well-ſetled ſpirits, under the moſt amazing, and ſtupendious providences that are ordered out: and whatſoever difficulties you meet withal; whatſoever diſcouragements there are before you, you may be inabled to hold on in your way, and not be over-powred by them: this is an argument of a well-grown Faith, when nothing beats us off; *Let him kill me*, ſaith *Job*, *i'll truſt in him ſtill.* The woman of *Canaan*, whatſoever diſcouragements there were ſeemingly, ſhe reſolved upon it, not to let her hold go, not to ſuffer her ſuit to fall: this is the Faith, and of ſuch a proportion, that we ſhould preſs after; ſo to grow in Faith, that nothing may drive us from our hold, nor make us to fall under diſcouragements.

Again, your duty is, to grow in Faith; ſuch a growth in Faith, as that you may come to be leſs ſelfiſh, and more for God; more pure in your aims at the Glory of God, and of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.: Truly, this will evidence a growth in Faith, and this is the Faith ſo evidenced, that you ſhould endeavour to grow in. It is uſual with poor Beleevers, in their ffrſt ſetting out upon the way of Faith, and beleeving, 'tis uſual with them; and truly, it is a gracious indulgence of God towards them, he bears with them in it: It is uſual (I ſay) with poor, weak Beleevers, at their

their first beginning, to be mainly solicitous about their own Salvation; they stand under convictions of their obnoxiousness unto the wrath of God, to the curse of the Law, and have some apprehensions of the dreadful condition of the damned in Hell, and what it is to be eternally separated from God, everlastingly excommunicated from fellowship with him, and his people; and when they think of these things, O! what shall become of me to all eternity? what a miserable wretch shall I be, if I should live and dye out of the favour of God, and not be reconcil'd unto him by his Christ? if so be that guilt should lye upon my conscience; if so be that the wrath of God should still abide upon me; O! what a cursed wretch shall I be to all eternity? O! what shall I do, that I may escape this curse, and condemnation, and come to be made partakers of Christ, and of the Salvation that is by him? This is usually at the first the work of a poor soul, beginning now to look out after Christ, and pursuing after an interest in the grace and blessing of the Gospel; the blessing of Salvation, and much what the souls acting is upon a selfish account: Fain would it be secured, as touching its estate, and that it should be kept from eternal perishing; and this doth very much sway in the heart of a poor, weak Beleever, that he doth not so much mind the glory of God, and the honour of Christ, and the exaltation of the grace of the Gospel: but fain would he be ~~said~~, as the poor *Gaoler*, when he came to be convinc'd; O sirs; he comes trembling and quaking before *Paul* and *Sylas*; O sirs, what shall I do to be saved? how shall I do to escape the wrath to come? Men and Brethren, say the people, in *Acts* 2. when they were pricked

pricked at their hearts, upon the convincement that they lay under, concerning Chriſt, and that they had contracted the guilt of his blood upon their conſciences; O ſirs, what ſhall we do? I feel a load of guilt upon me, and I ſee a hell before me, and I am in danger to ſink down into the bottomleſs lake; O ſirs, what ſhall I do? O pitty, pitty a poor ſoul, in danger of being ſwallowed up in deſtruction: theſe are the workings of a poor Beleever, that's taken up mainly with ſolicitouſneſs about his own ſafety. And, I ſay, the Lord is pleaſed to deal very favourably with this poor creature: and indeed, God doth allow this, that his people ſhould be ſolicitous about their own Salvation: Self-love, upon ſuch an account, doth not fall under Goſpel-condemnation. But now, this is not the advanced Faith, the improved Faith, this doth not argue ſo much a well-grown Faith, as when a ſoul comes to this, for to purſue life and ſalvation, and to follow after a portion in the Glory that is to come; — upon what account? — why, upon the account of this; — By my Salvation, God ſhall be eternally glorified, by my being one of his pardoned ones, his reconciled ones; the Grace of our Lord Jeſus ſhall be exalted, by my being delivered from the curſe of the Law, and from the condemnation of Hell: by my being delivered, I ſhall come to ſtand as a living, and a laſting monument of free Love, of glorious Grace: and this is the rejoycing of my heart, to think, that I ſhall eſcape the vengeance of Hell, the wrath to come, and everlaſting condemnation, and ſo be with the Saints and Angels in Heaven for ever, to ſound forth the praiſes of God, and to aſcribe Honour, and Glory, and Salvation, and Bleſſing,

Bleſſing, and Dominion, and Power, to the Lamb, that lives for evermore: Ah, here's the well-grown Faith; when a ſoul comes to work off (as it were) from ſelf, it looks not ſo much upon ſelf; my Salvation, O! what's my Salvation to the Glory of God? why, God ſhall be Glorified in my being eternally ſaved. If I ſhould periſh, and go to Hell, what! I ſhould be tormented there; is that all? — Nay, God will be diſhonoured: Hell is a place that knows no love, knows no ſubjection, knows no fear of God; it's a place where God is continually blaſphemed, and ſhall be to all eternity. O, I would not come there, nor go to Hell, upon any tearms; not ſo much, becauſe I would not be tormented there, but rather thus, I would not periſh, and damn, becauſe I would not have God diſhonoured by me: I would not be like thoſe damned ſouls, and thoſe damned devils; I would not be among them that hate God, and will hate him to all eternity, and do nothing but curſe him, and blaſpheme him, and ſpeak diſhonourably of him: O, I would not go to Hell, becauſe of Blaſphemies there: I would go to Heaven, becauſe there is exalting, and magnifying, and bleſſing of God there. When a ſoul comes to this, to have Faith to be ſo improved, as that he eyes the Glory of God more than his own Salvation: and this you are to know, that Gods Glory is the ultimate end of all his actions, all his purpoſes and decrees, and all his providential diſpenſations. The Glory of God is that, which (I ſay) is the ultimate end: God hath this in deſign, that he may be eternally glorified in the Salvation, and damnation both of men and Angels. Now, that that is Gods utmoſt end, ſhould be our utmoſt end;

end; and the Faith which is of due growth, will inable to this; to ſay, I would be ſaved principally, that God may be Glorified: I would not be damned, principally, becauſe I would not have God to be diſhonoured. When ſelf-intereſt, and ſelf-concernment begins to wear off, and Gods Glory ſtand fully in our eye; and when we are upon this deſign, that God may be Glorified in our eternal well-being, this will be a proof of a well-grown Faith.

Further, your duty is, to grow in Faith; 'tis your duty; and thus ſhould you grow, to this point, and proportion; That you, by being exerciſed in Godlineſs, may come to mind the well-fare of others more than ever you did. At the firſt beginning, when God firſt ſets in with a ſoul; alas, it hath ſcarce any charity to ſpare from it ſelf: it's love, and charity, and care, will ſcarce look without doors, ſcarce ſtep over the threſhold; but altogether ſolicitous about its own concernments, that it may be well with it ſelf: I, but now, when Faith comes to be well improved, and to be a well-grown Faith, then there comes to be an eying of others; What ſhall I do to be ſaved? Nay, what ſhall I do, that *my Brother* may be ſaved? my *Siſter* ſaved? my *Wife*? my *Husband*? that my Friends and Acquaintance may be ſaved? O! now God hath given me ſome hope, that Hell ſhall never be my portion, that I ſhall not go down to deſtruction: I, but what if my Brother ſhould go to Hell, and I go to Heaven? what if my Husband ſhould go down to Eternal Vengeance, and I get into Glory?

O Lord, what will become of ſuch a neer relation? Alas, it is not enough to me now, that I am ſecure, as touching my eternal eſtate, and that I have hope towards God, that I ſhall eſcape the vengeance to come: But now, I begin to think with my ſelf; O, ſuch a ſoul lies in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bonds of iniquity: Such a child, ſuch a one in neer relation, that is wallowing in the blood of his own ſoul: O! what ſhall become of him? what ſhall I do to be ſaved? what ſhall I do, that my Brethren may be ſaved; and that my Relations may eſcape the vengeance to come? The *woman of Samaria*, when ſhe came to have ſome comfortable communion with Chriſt, ſhe begins to be ſolicitous about her neighbours, and goes to them, and ſaith; O, I have met with Jeſus, and, *come, ſee a man that hath told me all that ever I did; is not this the Chriſt?* Truly Brethren, a Beleever, when he comes to be of a well-improved Faith, he would not be alone in his mercy, he would not eat his morſels alone, he would not go to Heaven without company: and I tell you, that this is an argument of a well-improved Faith. When our Faith it goes abroad, our ſolicitouſneſs, it is not only for our ſelves, but others; when our Charity goes out of doors, and we are now projecting, and caſting about how we may promote others eternal welfare: when *Paul* could ſay, I am perſwaded, that neither Height, nor Depth, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Life, nor Death, nor things preſent, nor things to come, ſhall be able to ſeparate from the Love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus: when *Paul* comes to this *Plerophoria*, when he comes to be thus improved in his Faith; ſaith he, in *Rom. 9.* Brethen, I would have you to know, that *I ſay the truth*

truth in Chriſt, I lye not, my Conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt, that I have great heavyneſs, and continual ſorrow in my heart: — Why, what man! Did'ſt thou not write but juſt now, that thou waſt perſwaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, &c. ſhould be able to ſeparate from the Love of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord: Why, *Paul*, will you ſpeak to ſuch a purpoſe as this then, that you have great heavineſs, and continual ſorrow in your heart? Why, you ſhould be full of joy: who ſhould rejoyce in all the World, if they do not, nor ſhould not, that have a confident perſwaſion that they ſhall go to Heaven, and be eternally bleſſed with God, and live in everlaſting communion with him? Do you ſay you have great heavineſs, and continual ſorrow in your heart? Why, the buſineſs of Faith, is to fill the ſoul with joy and peace in beleeving; and, do you talk of ſorrow and heavineſs in your heart? — why, what ſhould be the matter? — O, Brethren, he had now a well-grown Faith, his Faith was improved exceedingly, that he was now ſure that all was well between God and him; he was ſure to go to Heaven himſelf, and that nothing ſhould be able to ſeparate. And now his heart begins to turn upon his poor Brethren; I have great heavineſs, and continual ſorrow in my heart. I profeſs, ſaith he, I could ſet down, ſo far as it might be without ſinning againſt God; yea, I could be contented, to be cut off from the comfortable and rejoycing part of Salvation; I could be contented, even to be cut off from the comfortable communion, not, that he would be in a ſtate of guilt and ſin, and wrath, and under the hatred of God: But, I could be contented, ſaith he,

to

to be even cut off from that ſweet injoyment that Saints have in their glorified eſtate, for my Brethrens ſake, according to the fleſh. Now, ſaith he, it's the ſorrow of my heart, while I am full of joy and comfort, in reſpect of my own condition; I am full of heavineſs, and continual ſorrow there is upon me; that my Brethren, that are the ſeed of *Abraham*, that they ſhould be ſtrangers to this Grace, and like to be ſhut out from the Salvation which I am now ſure of; and then is the Faith of a Beleever, a well-grown Faith, when it comes to be ſolicitous of others welfare.

And for thoſe that are brought over to Faith, but are weaklings in Faith; when there is a bearing with their weakneſſes, and infirmities, a ſtudying to pleaſe them in all things, for their profit, and a friendly deportment; when there is not a grating upon them, nor a galling of them by any unbecoming carriage: Saith the Apoſtle, in *Rom.* 15. *We that are ſtrong*, that are ſtrong in Faith, *ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves: for, let let every one of us pleaſe his neighbour, for his good to edification: for even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf, but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fall on me.* We that are ſtrong; we that come to have a well-grown Faith, we ſhould look with a tender, and compaſſionate eye, and heart, upon tender Brethren, and not ſo much inſiſt upon what will be to the pleaſing of our ſelves, but what will be to the pleaſing of our weak Brethren, ſo far as is conſiſtent with their profit, and the edification of our ſouls. It was thus with Chriſt, and it ſhould be thus with us: this will be a proof of our growth in Faith.

Further,

Further, our duty is, to grow in Grace, and to grow in *Faith*; and ſuch a growth ſhould we preſs after, that we may be able for to uſe, and enjoy the World, and the good things of it, with heavenly minds; ſo, as that we come to value our ſelves, not ſo much by what we are in the World, as by what we are in in the Covenant, and by what eſtate we have in the Covenant: not to make ſo much matter of it, that we are able to give an account of ſuch and ſuch an eſtate in Land, and Houſes, and worldly Poſſeſſions; but to valew our ſelves upon this accout, that we are able for to make out an eſtate in the Covenant, and that all our outward enjoyments are held by a Covenant; and that's it that gives us the comfort of our enjoyments: Such an eſtate I have, I, but, bleſſed be God, I have it by a ſpiritual title; Chriſt is mine, and I am Chriſts, and ſo all things beome mine; I have a ſpiritual title, and I hold all by virtue of a Covenant in Chriſt. I would not valew the World; I would not value my outward condition, my riches; if they be thouſands, and ten thouſands in the World, I ſhould look upon them but as a beggerly portion, if I had them not upon a ſpiritual account, and upon the account of an intereſt in Chriſt: O, God that hath given me Chriſt, he hath given me with him, all theſe things. When a man can look upon his eſtate, be it never ſo large and copious; to look upon it, as that which his heart would be dead to: if it were not, that he could look upon theſe things that he doth injoy, as upon a Covenant Conveyance.

And when a ſoul comes to this, to uſe the World with a heavenly mind, manage the affairs of the World, I, but with dependance upon God: When a

man in the way of his Calling, and management of his affairs here below, goes on with diligence and care; I, but with a humble dependance upon God: and, while he doth his duty, he can truſt God with the ſucceſs. Let the times be hard, and trading dead, and little in-comes; no matter, i'll open my ſhop, and i'll attend the providence of God; and whether little or much come in, I am not ſolicitous about that; I am reſolved upon this, I will do my duty, and wait upon God; and I know, it muſt be his bleſſing muſt be the portion for me to live upon: And it is not the in-come of the World, that I ſet my heart ſo much upon; but i'll do my duty, and leave the ſucceſs to God.—— There are two or three things more, but, for the preſent, only weigh what hath been ſaid; and conſider, that I have been ſpeaking to you to this purpoſe; that you, that are the Sons and Daughters of Faith, look to it, that there be a growth in Faith: ——And, ſuch a growth, as that the myſterie of the everlaſting Goſpel ſtand faſt in you, that you may be able to comprehend with all the Saints, the height, and depth, and length, and breadth: ——— That you may grow up to ſuch a Faith; no, that you may not only live by it, but live at a high rate; that you may not only live by it, but live honourably, that you may fare deliciouſly every day. —— Such a Faith, as is not only a conflicting, but a conquering, and triumphing Faith.—— Such a Faith, as brings you off more from ſelf, and makes you ſeek God more, his Glory more.—— Such a Faith, as makes you to be ſtudious, not only of your own eternal welfare, but of the welfare of others.—— Such a Faith, as makes you to value your ſelves, not according

cording to your worldly injoyments; but that you value what you injoy, according to a Covenant of Grace, and your ſelf according to that account. And this way truly, you may give good proof, that you are perſons that anſwer the duty in the Text, which the Apoſtle requires; That we grow in Grace. —

SERM. VI.

I Shall only add a Particular or two about Growth in Faith.

Your duty is, to endeavour to ſuch a growth in Faith, that you may be able to *meditate Terror*. It is one thing for to be poſſeſt with terror, to be apprehenſive of terror, and to be amazed and aſtoniſhed through terror upon us; another thing to be able to make terror the matter of our meditation: One thing for to be apprehenſive of that which is matter of terror, and to be affrighted with it, and ready to ſink under the apprehenſions of it: another thing, for to have not only the apprehenſions, but to have the heart bearing up with a holy confidence, without being in the leaſt diſcompoſure; to have a fixedneſs of ſoul, a ſetledneſs of heart; and not to be ſtartled, and to be ready to run this way, and that way and even to be at our wits ends, not knowing in the World what courſe to take. Now, this is one of the great priviledges which belongs to Beleevers, and to the Saints of God, to be able to meditate terror;

you have the expreſſion in *Iſa.* 33. 18. There it's held forth unto us, as a Saints and Beleevers priviledge, ~~that~~ their hearts ſhall meditate terror: And it is not every Faith that will bring a Saint into the actual poſſeſſion of free uſage of this priviledge. (I would you would labour to have a fixed heart now upon what I ſpeak, and be in a due compoſure.) I ſay this, It is not every degree of Faith, that will bring the ſoul into the actual and free poſſeſſion, and uſage of this priviledge that I now ſpeak of: For, to make that which is matter of terror and amazement; that which is apt to ſink and ſwallow up the hearts and ſpirits of others, to make it the matter of our joyful and comfortable meditation; 'tis not every Faith, every degree of Faith. 'Tis true indeed, every Faith in the loweſt degree, hath a tendency to it: every Faith doth more or leſs, make oppoſition to a carnal and ſlaviſh fear. But it is found in experience, that where Faith is but low and weak, it is apt to be over-top'd, and over-powred, by baſe, carnal, ſlaviſh fear; it is found in common experience. But it muſt be a well-improved Faith, a Faith well grown, that inables the ſoul to bear up boldly and reſolutely, when there is matter of fear before it. The Prophet ſpeaks, in *Pſal.* 112. concerning the righteous man, That he hath his heart fixed; he is ſo advanced in his Faith, as that he is come to a fixedneſs; *his heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord.* — And then it follows, *He ſhall not be afraid for any evil tydings*; that that is matter of terror and aſtoniſhment to others, he can with a ſweet compoſure of ſpirit, meditate of, muſe upon, and be in the thoughts of; this is a great matter, and a lovely priviledge, and that which we ſhould ſet our hearts

hearts upon: Such a Faith, of ſuch a growth, we ſhould endeavour after, that we may be able to meditate terror.—— There is a terribleneſs in God,—in his Name,— The Lord is of terrible Majeſty,— Terribleneſs in his preſence; when that Proclamation was made, in *Iſa.* 6. *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hoſts*; the Prophet cryes out now, *Woe is me.* When there was a Proclamation of God upon *Mount Sinai*, in thunder and lightning: When there was that dreadful voice, O, the people cry out, let us hear no more the voice of God, leſt we die. Now, a well-improved Faith will be able for to meditate of this terror, I, and to dwell with that God in holy meditation, and to converſe with that God that is of ſuch terrible Majeſty: *Who ſhall dwell with devouring fire? who ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* that is, as terrible as devouring fire, as dreadful as everlaſting burning; who ſhall dwell with him? who ſhall be able to bear up at the thoughts of him? why, a ſoul that is well improved in his Faith, will be inabled ſo to do: Such a Faith, of ſuch a growth, we ſhould endeavour after, as that we may be able thus to meditate the terror of God; not be affraid of him. True it is, it is a duty that is incumbent upon us, to have our hearts in a holy awe, but withal, to bear up in a holy boldneſs, and not to be ſwallowed up with fear, upon the manifeſtations of the terribleneſs of God.

So there is a terribleneſs in the Law, in the Covenant of works that God made, and which he made a dreadful diſcovery of upon *Sinai*: A fiery Law it is, and ſo called, in *Deut.* 33. It's a terrible Law, that flaſhes fire and vengeance in the face of an ungodly ſinner, of a guilty wretch: I, but now,

the Faith of a Beleever well improved, will inable him for to meditate with ſweet compoſure of ſpirit, upon this terrible Law; and with a rejoycing ſpirit, think of the ridgedneſs, and ſevear requiries of it; knowing, that it hath taken ſanctuary at a Covenant which is full of mercy and comfort, and doth ſweetly revive and ſuccour the ſoul, under the dreadfulleſt repreſentations that can be made to it of its own guilt.

There is a terriblenes in Death, and it is called the *King of Terrors*: And how many are there, that are not able to bear the thoughts of it? not able to ſtand before the thoughts of their dying? I, how many are there, poor creatures, that, when the thoughts of Death do but ariſe in them, they are ready to be ſwallowed up of it, and they do all that ever they can to fortifie themſelves againſt thoſe thoughts, as 'tis a common thing for perſons to do: they cannot indure to be put upon the ſerious conſideration of their dying day, and having a diſſolution made between ſoul and body. Whence is this? but either from the total want, or a very great weakneſs that is in their Faith? — either their want, that they have none at all, and then, no marvel, that the thoughts of Death be terrible to them; why, they are under the guilt of ſin, and they muſt go to Hell when they dye. O, it's a ſad thing, and I would there might be a fixedneſs of heart upon this; it is a ſad thing to think of it, that there ſhould be nothing but a little *breath* between a poor creature and eternal deſtruction; and if that be but with-held for a quarter of an hour, the ſoul goes down to eternity: if God take away their breath, they dye, and return to duſt; and when they dye, they dye in a ſtate of guilt, and ſo damn

to

to eternity: Now, no marvel, that ſuch perſons cannot indure to meditate ſuch terror.—— And then others, that are weak in their Faith, and are not comfortably ſetled in their confidence concerning the Grace of Chriſt in them, and their reconciled ſtate: No marvel, if they be ſhaken and perplexed about it, when they come to have the thoughts of death. Now, Faith improved to a good degree, will inable a ſoul to meditate this terror, to think of it, I, with a holy rejoycing, and content: to think that a day will come, that will make a diſſolution between the ſoul and body, that ſo upon that diſſolution, there may be a more full injoyment of the Lord Jeſus, according to what the Apoſtle ſpeaks, in *Phil.* 1. *having a deſire.* I deſire to depart; when a mans Faith will inable the ſoul to this, to look upon death, as a thing to be deſired: not only as that which there is a neceſſity lying upon the creature to undergo; not only ſo, there is a neceſſity lies upon me, it being enacted, ſo that a ſoul dies out of a neceſſity, he cannot help it; if he could help it, he would be glad with all his heart, to keep off the ſtroke of death; but he dyes out of choice: this is the Faith that we ſhould preſs after; and this is that, that Faith well improved, will inable to meditate this terror, and to bear up under the apprehenſions of it; reckoning upon this, That, *as to live, is Chriſt*, ſo, *to dye is will be gain*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; and therefore he proteſſeth, that he has a deſire rather to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all.

And then again, there is a terribleneſs in judgement, ſo it is called, in 2 *Cor.* 5. The terror of the Lord; the day which is appointed, wherein God will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that

man whom he hath ordained, even the Lord Jesus. And all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, that ever were, from the beginning of the Creation, to the time of that appearing of his, shall all be convented, and made to stand before his Judgement-seat: and we, that are here this morning, shall all stand before this Judgement; and shall give an account to God of our preaching, and hearing, and how we have carried our selves in the Assemblies, and under the dispensations of the Ordinances, when there shall be an appearing before the great Judge of all the World. Truly, this day is a terrible thing, and it is called, (as I said) The terror of the Lord. Now, I say, this is a terror that a Faith-less soul will not be able to meditate, he is not able to bear up under the thoughts of it, and therefore doth all that it can to drive them away, black, melancholy thoughts, thoughts of death, and of judgement: Such thoughts as these cannot be indured to set a foot over the threshold, nor to come under the roof of the house: no, we will have nothing to do with such black thoughts.—— And then, those that are weak in Faith, they are ready to be startled at the apprehensions of this; It's a terror to them, to think of a day of Judgement: I, but I say, that a well-improved Faith, a Faith that is of a good growth, it will inable to meditate this terror, and to bring the soul to the free usage and possession of this blessed priviledge that belongs unto Beleevers. A person of a well-grown Faith, will be able to think of this with joy and gladness: be glad to think of the day wherein the Lord Jesus shall appear in flaming fire, to render vengeance to them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; A

man

man of a well-grown Faith, will be able to meditate this terror, and to rejoyce at the thoughts of it: It is the day of his gladneſs, therefore to this purpoſe, our Saviour ſaith, when theſe and theſe things ſhall come, do you lift up your heads: When mens hearts ſhall fail them with looking after thoſe things that ſhall come upon the earth; and when others ſhall cry out with *Balaam*, *Alas, who ſhall live?* what will become of us now? It is an amazing thing to think, when the Heavens ſhall be raiſed, and the Lord ſhall appear with his mighty Angels, to think what ſtartling there will be, and running this way, and that way! O! what a dreadful day is this? I am not able to ſtand before this Judge of all the World. O, it's an amazing thing to think, what skreeking and crying there will be on the part of ungodly ſinners, that are ſtrangers to Chriſt and Grace! But, a poor ſoul, that is well improved in Faith and Grace, he will be able to bear up with boldneſs: and our Saviour ſpeaks to that purpoſe; when mens hearts ſhall fail them, and grow dead as a ſtone within them, and they ſhall be full of aſtoniſhment, upon the appearing of the Lord Jeſus. Then lift up your heads with joy, the day of your Redemption draweth nigh; So that this is another thing that a well-grown Faith will inable to. To meditate terror, the terror of God,— The terror of the Law,— The terror of Death,— The terror of Judgement. O beloved, this is the Faith that we ſhould preſs to; and this growth in Faith, that you may be inabled to have the free uſage of this bleſſed priviledge; and that when others ſhall be over-whelmed in their ſpirits, you may be able to bear up with comfort. You hear of this, as that wherein we are to evidence a

growth

growth in Faith, when we are able to meditate Terror.

Laſtly, This I would only ſay, ſuch a Faith we
os ſhould preſs to, ſuch a growth in Faith; and that we may be [illegible] not only to *look* for, but to *long* after the ſerious appearing of Chriſt, which follows upon the former. O, it is not every Faith that will inable to this, to be in holy longings after the coming of the Lord Jeſus: *You come behind* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in no gift, waiting for that coming of Chriſt*, waiting for it, and *haſtening to it*: It is that which a well-grown Faith will inable to; and ſuch a degree of Faith, our duty is to endeavour after, that we may be able to ſay, with the Spouſe, *even ſo come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.* And thus I have ſpoken to you concerning Faith, when the Apoſtle calls upon us to grow in Grace. I have preſt the duty, with reſpect to this particular Grace of Faith: and this know, (as I ſaid in the beginning of the diſcourſe,) That truly, the growth of other Graces, doth very much depend upon the growth of Faith: and the reaſon why we are ſo low and poor in other Graces, it is, becauſe our Faith is not better improved, and raiſed up to a higher pitch.

But yet, I would ſpeak ſomething concerning two or three other Graces; and ſo endeavour to faſten this charge of the Apoſtle upon you. Your duty is, (if you have Grace) to grow in Grace: do but think of it ſeriouſly, and ſtudy to anſwer the duty of the Text; Grow in Grace; Grow in Faith.

I, and know, that it is your duty to grow in *Love*; In Love to God, in Love to Chriſt, in Love to the Truth, in Love to the Saints, in Love with Heaven; this is that that you ſhould ſet your hearts unto.

unto. Have you any thing of the Love of God in you? If you know that; it's your duty to improve in that Love, as you are taught of God to Love; ſo you are taught of God, to increaſe, and abound in Love. If there be a *ſpark* of Love in you to God, you ſhould labour to bleſs God for that; but labour withal, that that ſpark may be blown up into a flame.

Are you able to ſay, with *Peter*, if the queſtion ſhould be put to you, as it was to him; *Simon, Son of Jonah, Loveſt thou me?* You ſhould be thinking with your ſelves, if Chriſt ſhould put ſuch a queſtion to you; ſuch a one, *Thomas, John*, Brother, Siſter, doſt thou love me? that you may be able to ſay, without check of conſcience; *Yea Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee.* It were very good for every one of us, to be putting this queſtion to our own hearts; O my ſoul, doſt thou love God indeed? art thou able to make a bold profeſſion of thy love to God? Doth not thy conſcience tell thee, that thou lyeſt, when thou ſayeſt thou loveſt him, and his Chriſt, and his Spirit, and his waies? Doſt thou indeed love him? If we can ſay with boldneſs, and without check, and controul of conſcience; Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee.

Then I would ſay this to thee; Doſt thou love him? O, labour to love him more and more; to love him with a more intire love, with a more intenſive love. Love him with ſuch a love, that whatſoever duties he requires of thee, thou mayeſt cheerfully apply to them. O Lord, I love thee, and I ſo love thee, that I think nothing too much to do for thee; ſo love thee, as that I think nothing too much to ſuffer for thee. If thou call me to duty,

O

O Lord, I love thee ſo dearly, that I ſtick at nothing of duty. O Lord, I love thee with ſuch an intire, and an intenſive love, that I think nothing too much to ſuffer for thee: ſuch a love we ſhould preſs to, and improve to ſuch a flame, that we may be able to ſay, all this is come upon us, (as the Church ſpeaks, in *Pſ.* 44.) yet have we not departed from thee, nor have we dealt falſely in thy Covenant: this is the Love, a flaming Love to God, to Chriſt, to the Truth, to waies of Holyneſs; ſuch a Love, as no waters may be able to quench.

And then thirdly, Grow in Grace, — in what Grace? O Chriſtians, if ſo be that you have any *Fear* of God in you, look to it, that that fear be a growing Fear: I ſpeak now of a holy fear, a child-like fear, a fear of Reverence, a fear that is conſiſtent with love: The Fear of God, it is a Grace which you ſhould endeavour to grow in; that it may be ſaid of you, that you Fear God; I, you fear God above many. It's an excellent teſtimony that's given concerning one, in the book of *Neh.* The teſtimony is given of him, that he feared God, and he feared God above many. Now, ſuch a fear, that we may go beyond others in their fear: others have a fear of God, to ſuch or ſuch a degree; I, but the fear in ſuch a one, is far paſſing the fear of others: — Such a fear of God we ſhould endeavour to come to, that when a temptation comes upon us, and it comes with the greateſt advantages, (conſider of it) and we have the faireſt opportunities to commit the ſin that we are tempted to: ſuch a fear we ſhould endeavour to be poſſeſt withal, that we may break the force, and power of the temptation, that it may not, in the leaſt, faſten upon us. Such a fear there was in

Joſeph,

Joseph, when the temptation was upon him so strong, and comes upon him with so much advantage, the fear of God was so strong upon his heart, that he was inabled to bid defiance to the temptation, and to quit himself in an honourable manner.—

Such a Fear of God, so improved, and grown up to such a degree, that when there are difficult duties before us to perform; and such duties, as we shall be in danger by performing of them, to fall into deep and dreadful sufferings: Such a Fear, as, let the danger be what it will, that I may expose my self to, in case I perform the duty; yet, the Fear of God is so strong upon my heart, as that, notwithstanding all the danger, the duty shall be done. This was the case of *Obadiah*; there was a duty incumbent upon him, and which he had opportunity to perform, concerning the Prophets of the Lord; He takes 100 of them, and gets them into a Cave, and there he feeds them by 50 in a Cave; this was a very difficult, and a dangerous duty; it was as much as his life amounted to, in case that *Jezabel* should have come to the knowledge of it. I, but notwithstanding the difficulty, and the danger; such was the fear of God in him, that he was inabled to the performance of this duty; and therefore he could speak boldly to *Eliah*, in 1 *Kin.* 18. *I, thy Servant, fear the Lord*; and that with such a fear, thot when *Jezabel* slew the Prophets of the Lord, I hid 100 of them by 50 in a Cave.—

Such a Fear we should labour to be possest withal, as that, when we are apt to be insnared, and inslaved by the fear of men, the fear of God may break the force of that fear.

Solo

Solomon tell us, In the fear of man, there is a ſnare, and how apt are people to be enſnared by it? I, but now, if the Fear of God were but well improved, it would break the ſnare, and ſwallow up the fear of man. *In the fear of man there is a ſnare*; But, *in the fear of the Lord, there is ſtrong confidence*: theſe are two Proverbs that are worthy of our meditation: now, this is the fear that we ſhould preſs after. As in the caſe of the three Children, that were required, upon pain of being caſt into a Fiery Furnace, they muſt fall down, and worſhip the Golden Image: there was the fear of the King; I, but there was the fear of God ſo improved upon their hearts, that they would not be inſlaved, nor inſnared by the Kings fear. And ſo the Diſciples of our Lord, when the charge was given them, that they ſhould preach no more in this Name; they laboured to put them into a Fear, and to over-awe them, that they ſhould let their cauſe fall, and appear no more in the Name of Jeſus: I, but mark how their ſpirits are kept up, having the Fear of God ſtrong upon their hearts; they were inabled to break the ſnare, and to go on in the way of their duty. Such a Fear of God we ſhould labour to be poſſeſt withal, to grow up to ſuch a degree, that dutyes, though difficult and dangerous, may be performed; — and ſins may be reſiſted; — and that the fear of man may be conquered. Such a fear we ſhould endeavour to grow in.

And then, as our duty is to grow in the Grace of Faith, of Love, and of the Fear of God; So our duty is, to endeavour a growth in Holyneſs. It is a mercy to have the leaſt impreſs of Holyneſs upon our ſpirits: I, but our duty is, to grow in Holyneſs: If we be holy, we ſhould endeavour to be

be more holy; according to that, in *Rev.* 22. *Let him that is Righteous, be Righteous ſtill*; let him be more Righteous: *Let him that is Holy, be Holy ſtill*: Let him be holy, and holy, and more and more holy; and let him labour to better his Holyneſs, and to grow up to a higher degree. We are not only to look to the beginning of Holyneſs, but to the progreſs, and to the increaſes of it; according to what the Apoſtle charges, 2 *Cor.* 7. *Having theſe promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all pollution of fleſh and ſpirit.* Is there ſome filthyneſs cleanſed away? I, but ſee that you cleanſe your ſelves from *all* filthyneſs of fleſh and ſpirit. Is there Holyneſs *begun* in you? I, but ſee that you *perfect* Holyneſs in the Fear of God: this is our duty, thus to grow in Holyneſs; I, and ſo to be holy, even as God is holy, according to what the Lord requires: not, that we can come to ſuch a perfection; I, but, according to the ſtate of a creature, we ſhould endeavour to be holy, as God is holy. As he is holy, as a God; ſo, we ſhould labour to be holy, according to the ſtate and meaſure of a creature. We ſhould endeavour after the higheſt degree of Holyneſs.

Grow in Holyneſs, and to ſuch a pitch of Holyneſs, as that it may be ſaid of us, according to what our Saviour ſpeaks of the Spouſe, *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no ſpot in thee.* Our duty is, to endeavour after ſuch a degree of Holyneſs, as, that there may be no blemiſh; but that we may be preſented before God, at laſt, with exceeding joy.

Such a Holyneſs we ſhould endeavour to preſs after, as that we may be ſenſible of the leaſt meaſure of corruption: where there is but a little Grace,

Grace, corruptions and luſts, in the ſtirrings of them, are not ſo eaſily perceived: But, where there is moſt Grace, there is moſt life; and where there is moſt life, there is moſt ſpiritual ſenſe and feeling: and there are none ſo ſenſible of corruption, and ſtirrings of luſt, as thoſe that have the moſt Grace in them: there are ſecret motions of ſin and corruption, which, it may be, a perſon that hath but a lower meaſure and degree of Grace and Faith, will not take any great notice of; The motions, and inward boylings of luſts and corruptions; the luſt of Uncleanneſs, or of Pride, or Covetounſeſs: There's many a ſtirring luſt, that a ſoul, that either is in total want of Grace, or hath but Grace in a lower meaſure or degree, takes no great knowledge of. I, but when there comes to be a growth in Grace, to a good degree; O, then every ſtirring of luſt and corruption, will be perceived, and the ſoul will be up againſt it, and endeavour a ſuppreſſing of it. Such a growth in Grace and Holyneſs, that there may be a ſenſe of every luſt and corruption; a luſt cannot ſtir in the ſoul, but the ſoul is upon the back of it, and endeavours to uſe all ſeverity againſt it.

Such a growth in Holyneſs we ſhould endeavour to, that we may be moſt cordially complyant with all the Counſels of God; and the more the will of God is manifeſted, and made known to us, the more we delight in it: the more it is made to appear in the latitude of it, and in the ſtrictneſs of it, the more our hearts are upon complyance with it. Such a Holyneſs we ſhould endeavour to preſs after, as that we may be able to ſay; there is a ſecret heart riſing againſt every bubling of corruption.

Such

Such a Holyneſs we ſhould preſs after, as that we can take the greateſt delight in communion with God.

Such a Holyneſs, as that we can long after Heaven; and that, becauſe of the Holyneſs of it.

Such a degree of Holyneſs, as that we may be able to ſay, we are even weary of living here in this lower World, becauſe of the corruptions, and luſts, and prophaneneſs, and abominable impieties that are committed here.

O, this is the Holyneſs that we ſhould endeavour to; ſuch a degree of Holyneſs, as that we may be made every day more and more ſuitable to God, and fitted to hold communion with the bleſſed God: For this know, that the more Holyneſs, the more conformity to God; ---- and the more Holyneſs, the more fitneſs for the moſt intimate communion with God. And thus, in theſe, and all other Graces, we ſhould endeavour to grow; according to the charge of the Apoſtle here; *But grow in Grace.* I have thus been labouring with you, according to my ability, and preſſing upon you to this purpoſe; a growth in Grace, a growth in Faith, a growth in Love, a growth in the Fear of God, a growth in Holyneſs, and ſo in other Graces, which I might inſiſt upon. But I ſhall ſatisfie my ſelf, in having thus dealt with you, concerning theſe particulars.

And in the General, according to the expreſſion of the Text; Brethren, this is your duty; you that are ſons and daughters of Grace, this is the duty that is incumbent upon you, and which is required of you: --- You that have Grace, your duty is, to

grow in Grace, and endeavour ſuch a growth in Grace, that ſin may be almoſt quite gone out of you: thus it is, ſo much as you have of Grace, ſo much there is of a riddance of ſin; ſo much as there is a remaining of ſin, ſo much there is of the want of Grace. Now, this is our duty, to endeavour ſuch a growth in Grace, as that there may be much of Grace, and but little of ſin; that the houſe of *David* may grow ſtronger and ſtronger, and may appear ſo to do, by the houſe of *Saul*, its growing every day weaker and weaker.

Oh Chriſtians, ſo ſhould you labour to grow, and to grow to ſuch a degree, to ſuch a meaſure and proportion of Grace, that you may be able to ſay, Truly, the caſe ſtands ſo with me; heretofore it ſtood thus with me, that I could ſcarce tell how to do a duty, and to turn my hand upon any holy duty; but now, through the Grace of God, and his bleſſing upon the means I have uſed, I am come to that paſs now, that I can ſcarce tell now how to commit a ſin: this is the growth we ſhould preſs after: I can do nothing againſt the truth, I could do little for the truth; I can do little or nothing againſt the truth: I had ſtrength to ſin, and I was very weak to duty, weak for prayer, and weak for beleeving, and weak for conflicting with corruptions: I, but now Grace is ſo improved in me, that now I am able to do any thing, I am able to do all things, through Chriſt, and by his Grace in me: I cannot ſin for my heart, as once I could: this is the growth that we ſhould preſs after.

I, ſuch a growth in grace we ſhould endeavour to, as that we may be, upon all occaſions, commanded by the Scripture, and by Scripture-arguments and

and reaſons, and ſwayed with them, whatſoever arguments come to the contrary. Truly, this is an argument of a ſoul well improved in Grace, and in the things of God; when Gods arguments will bear ſway with it, all other arguments, they ſignifie little or nothing; but an argument drawn from the Command of God, from the Love of God, and from Grace; ſuch an argument will prevail. I ſhall ſin againſt God, if I neglect this duty; — if I commit this, I ſhall diſhonour God; — I ſhall offend my Brother; — I ſhall wound my Conſcience; — I ſhall walk unſuitably to the Name that's call'd upon me, to my holy Profeſſion; — I ſhall walk unanſwerably to the Grace that I am planted under: when ſuch arguments as theſe are of a prevailing power, it's an argument that the Kingdom of God is come with power into our ſouls, when Chriſts arguments are the ſwaying, and the prevailing arguments with us. Thus now, I have been driving this buſineſs; for my own part, I profeſs to you, (and the Lord help us to conſider wiſely of it,) I hope I may ſay, in regard of the Grace of God implanted, it doth as much concern me, as any one of you; that I preſs on you to a growth in Grace; it's as much my duty as yours, and as much your duty as mine; and it will be a woful account that we ſhall give another day, if you and I ſhall appear before the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and ſhall have this charged upon us: you preach'd indeed a growth in Grace, and you that were the hearers, you heard concerning a growth in Grace; but neither Preacher nor Hearer, ſet your ſelves to anſwer your duty. Now, ow ſhall we give account of this? if you will go away with meer notions, and reſt in this; for I tell you, there is a

great deal of danger that you lye open to, in paſſing over Sermons of this nature, making no great matter of them. You have heard the Diſcourſe, and have been called upon to this purpoſe; *Grow in Grace*, and in the mean time, pleaſe your ſelves with this conceit; well, it matters not, it is a myſterious thing, we know not what to think of the matter, whether there be ſuch a growth as is ſpoken of; we will look to this, to ſee that there be Grace in the truth of it, and ſo put off the matter of growth: I tell you, that this is dangerous. We muſt, as we will approve our ſelves to God, and walk worthy of the proviſion he hath made to us; it is our duty, that as we have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo, to walk in him, grow up in him that is the head, and increaſe with the increaſe of God; and hold ſome proportion to time, and means, and ordinances, and pains that God takes with us; and that our profiting may appear unto all men.

SERM.

SERM. VII.

IT is our duty, as you have heard, to grow in Grace; and ſo to grow, that our profiting may appear unto all: And it is that which concerns both Preachers and Hearers, and all ſorts of Profeſſors of Godlyneſs; that they endeavour this, that their profiting may appear, appear to themſelves, appear one to another.

And if you will ask me how we ſhall make it to appear that we do profit, that there is an improvement, that we do grow in Grace; how ſhall we make it appear? --- ſuppoſing that there is a willingneſs, and the heart is brought to this, that it may be made to appear, you may, without any great difficulty, attain to a reſolution this way.

Do not you know how men make it appear, that they have more ſtrength of body than others? they make it appear by greater activities, and by doing more, and greater ſervices.

You know how men make it appear, that they are richer than they were; that they are increaſed in their eſtates; why, they will, (if they be ingenious, and be not baſe, and ſordid, and ſlaves to their injoyments,) make it appear in a ſuitableneſs in their deportment, and carriages, and expences, and layings out: they will fare better, and they will go better apparelled, and they will be more ready to give, and they will drive greater trades: you know this as well as I, and better to; you know how men make it appear that they are richer men,

of more able eſtates: --- why, and do not you know how you may make it appear that you are better men in Chriſt? that you are better in Godlyneſs? that you have more Grace than you had? Surely, you cannot but reach this apprehenſion, and know how you may make it appear that you are ſo, that you are better in Faith and Godlyneſs. Wicked men, they do make it clearly to appear, that they are worſe than once they were; they will act more vigorouſly for the Devil, and in oppoſition to God, and to the waies of Godlyneſs: Wicked men, they make it clearly to appear, that they do grow worſe and worſe; they are more prophane, more proud; they diſcover themſelves ſo to be, by riſing higher and higher in their impieties, and inſolencies againſt God; and diſcovering themſelves without ſhame, and any check, without any ſtartling at it, diſcovering themſelves that they are reſolv'd upon it, for to go on with a high hand in their evil way.--- Why now, cannot you tell, you that are the ſons and daughters of Grace, that have the Grace of God in you, the Truth in you, and whoſe duty it is to grow in Grace? Cannot you tell how you may make it appear that you do grow in Grace? you ſhould ſhew your growth, manifeſt it to others, and to your ſelves, by being more active for God, and for Godlyneſs; -- ſpeak more for God, -- plead more for the cauſe of God, -- be more ſpiritual in your diſcourſes when you meet one with another, that others may find, that certainly there is a good ſtock of Grace within, becauſe there is ſuch large expence without. When you ſhall come to be more in holy diſcourſes one with another, and labouring to help one another heaven-ward; and be communicating one

one with another, in order to the furtherance of one another in the waies of Godlyneſs; ſtrengthen the hands one of another in God. When you ſhall come to make it appear, that you have more courage, and boldneſs, and reſolution for waies of Holyneſs; when you are more fruitful in the duties of Godlyneſs, and frequent in them. Thus you ſhould endeavour to make it appear, that you are perſons, that of a truth do grow in Grace; that you may give occaſion, one to another, to ſay, with rejoycing hearts; now, bleſſed be God, that ſuch a one comes on a-pace, ſhoots up a-main, grows up to a goodly ſtature: this is that that we ſhould ſet our hearts unto.

What can I ſpeak that is more proper for to be ſpoken to thoſe that are called to the participation of the Grace of the Goſpel? O, let not theſe words which I have ſpoken to this purpoſe, let them not paſs away, as if ſo be that we were diſcourſing of a very fable. Ah conſider! that I am ſpeaking about growth in Grace; and about the making of this growth viſibly to appear; that it may appear to God,-- appear to others,-- appear to our ſelves; that our Conſciences may be able for to witneſs with us, that of a truth there is a growth: This is your duty; and this is my buſineſs this morning, in part, thus to preſs upon you; not doubting, but that I ſpeak to ſuch as have received the Grace of God in truth. Conſider, that this Text doth charge it upon you, that you look to your growth. And thus you have, according to the Apoſtles Counſel, and Expreſſion, you have (and no more than needs) precept upon precept, and line upon line, here a little, and there a little; and I have done thus; I am dropping, and di-

ſtilling in you, and working as I can; but the Lord work, and tranſmit it from your ears to your hearts, this word which doth ſpeak to you, that you grow in Grace, and that you manifeſt a growth.

If ſo be that you ask me now; I, but what courſe ſhall we take? what may we do in order to this?

I would you were well ripened by virtue of that which hath been already performed in managing of this argument: I would to God that your hearts and minds were well ripened for the giving in of ſome directions to ſuch a purpoſe: And I wiſh with all my heart, that you and I had but our hearts brought to this, to make a conſcientious improvement of what we do already know; for I cannot but think, concerning many of you, that have been long hearers of Sermons, and profeſſors of the Goſpel of Gods Grace; that you, having heard often concerning growth in Grace, that you are able to ſay, why, ſuch an expedient hath been over and over, time after time propounded to me; I have had ſuch a direction, and ſuch a direction. I cannot but be perſwaded, that you are able to ſuggeſt to your ſelves what courſe is to be taken in order to ſpiritual growth; but all the matter is this, to make improvement of what we know, and to look to it, that we do not ſuffer our knowledge to lye dead upon our hands: but that which is the miſchief of all, and doth us the greateſt ſpoyl in Religion, is this; That when we hear Sermons, and have Gods directions given, and Wiſdoms Counſels concerning a courſe to be taken for our ſouls good; when we come to hear theſe things, we let them lye dead upon our hands, and never

let

ſet our ſelves to make a buſineſs of it, but reſolve our Religion and Godlyneſs into a meer formality, or moſtly do; and do not ſet our ſelves in good earneſt about the buſineſs that God calls for at our hands. Let me ask you now theſe Queſtions, being that I am to give you ſome directions how you may come to grow in Grace.

Did you never hear that this hath been an expedient that hath been propounded, a means preſcribed, that you ſhould take heed of worldly intanglements, of ſetting your hearts upon the World, of loving the World, and the things of the World? Did you never hear that this hath been a means propounded to you? I am perſwaded that you have been taught to know, that if you would grow in Grace, you muſt take heed of ſetting your heart upon the World, of loving the World, and the things of the World.

I, but conſider now, what will your Conſciences anſwer? Have I been careful to walk according to this direction? have I ſet my heart upon this, in order to growth in Grace, for to keep as looſe as I can? uſe it, but not ſet my heart upon it? Truly, this is a proper thing for to look to. Alas, Brethren, if you have not known it to purpoſe, labour to know it, that the World is a great enemy both to the plantation, (the World I mean, when the heart comes to cloſe with it, and with the things of it,) it is a very great enemy both to the plantation, and likewiſe to the augmentation of Grace: It hinders Grace from taking root, and it hinders Grace after 'tis rooted, from ſpringing up: 'Tis a very great enemy to increaſe, and growth in Grace.

And

And this know, It is a very hard matter to find a man that grows very rich in the World, that the ſame man doth grow very rich in Grace: It is poſſible ſo to be; but I profeſs, I do think it is a very rare thing to find, that a man that grows exceeding rich in the World, and is very eagerly ſet to advance in his worldly ſtate; that that man, though he may have Grace in truth; yet, it's rare to find ſuch a man to grow up to any conſiderable pitch of Grace and Godlyneſs. Therefore, let that be conſidered.--

And then ſecondly, Will you but do this? If there be but a deſire to grow in Grace, (as I am ſure there is cauſe for it,) will you but ſet your hearts to this; take heed there be not any ſecret correſponding with, and favouring of any thing that is ſenſual and naught. Take heed of any luſt, not only of a willing allowance, but of any favour, any friendly reſpect unto it; for truly, this is a great enemy to growth in Grace. Take heed of favouring your ſelf in any corruption, whether it be Pride, or Covetouſneſs, or Self-love, or Uncleanneſs, or a paſſionate ſpirit; take heed of bearing the leaſt favour to theſe; but be as ſevere againſt them as you can; uſe as ſtrict diſcipline upon your luſts and corruptions as you can. O, 'tis this that doth do us a great deal of miſchief, and doth very much prejudice the ſoul; that there is not a more through repenting, and breaking off our corruptions and luſts. *Amnon*'s luſtful love to his Siſter *Thamar*, it made him look lean from day to day: (I allude to it,) O, ſaith he to him, why do'ſt thou, being the Kings Son, look lean from day to day? O, ſaith he, I love my Siſter *Thamar*. Why are Chriſtians, that are the Kings Sons and Daughters,

ters, lean from day to day? O! there's ſomething amiſs! ſomething lyes within! ſome luſt and corruption, that is not fully ſubdued! This is that that cauſeth leanneſs in their faces.

And then thirdly, have not you been directed to this? That you would take heed of entertaining conceits of your own perfection; that you would take heed of ſwelling thoughts, of what you have already attained, ſo as to fancy to your ſelves a perfection. Keep your hearts in this apprehenſion, as *Paul* doth; I have not yet attained, I am not yet perfect, I am not ſo good as I ſhould be; and I am not ſo good as I am reſolved to be; and thereupon you will, by Grace, come to this reſolve as *Paul* did. I have not yet attain'd, I am not yet perfect; why then, I will forget what is behind, and I will reach to that which is before. Your duty is, to take knowledge of whatſoever Grace you have already received: I, but ſo take notice of it, to be thankful, as that you do not reſt in it, and ſay, it is enough, and I will look after no more: But ſo bleſs God for what is already beſtowed upon you, that you ſtill be preſſing on for a larger ſupply, and that you may come to be more and more improved in the Grace that is begun.

Fourthly, I would add this, in order to your growth, that you may do according to your duty; you and I, that we may grow in Grace: Will you but ſeriouſly propound this to your ſelves, make it your buſineſs, and reſolve upon it, that you will do your utmoſt to grow in Grace, and to be every day better and better? Natural growth, that comes on, whether we mind it or no. The child that's conceived in the womb, it minds not its growth;--when its born, and in its infancy, it minds not its growth;

I,

I, but yet there is a growth, and nature carries it on: I, but it is not ſo in Grace. Growth in Grace muſt be minded, and it muſt be attained, and we muſt propound it to our ſelves, that we may grow. And truly, I am perſwaded, if ſo be that Chriſtians would but go to work like rational creatures, like men that underſtood themſelves in a religiouſly rational way; if ſo be that they would but go to work as thoſe that do with religious reaſon weigh and conſider, that this is their duty to grow; and propound it, and make it their deſign, and reſolve upon it, to make a buſineſs of it, that they may grow in Grace; I am very confident of it, that there would be better growth: You know whether this be propounded by you, that you may be better in your Faith, and Love, and Holyneſs; that you may have more of God, and of Chriſt, more of the Kingdom of God, more of the power of the Goſpel, be more in expreſſing theſe things: Your Conſciences can tell you whether you propound theſe things to your ſelves, whether you can ſay; Truly, I am not ſo good as I would be; I would be better, and, by the Grace of God, I will be better; I will endeavour to better my condition, and to expreſs more of the in-dwelling of Chriſt in me. Undoubtedly, if you would but reſolve to make it a buſineſs, it would be better with you than it is.

5. If you deſire to grow in Grace, do but ſtudy what Grace is, and if you have it, what it is in you; why, is it not a lovely thing? Do you know what Grace is? a dramn of it is worth a 10000 Worlds! O, a little Faith, a little Love, a little of the Grace of God, it is more precious than all the pearls and jewels in the whole World; there's

there's nothing comparable to it. Now, if you have a little of this precious commodity, why ſhould not your hearts be ſet to this, that you may have more of it? And truly, this would be a good conducement to the raiſing up of your hearts to an endeavour this way: why, this Grace is a precious thing; a little I have gotten of it, and it is ſo precious, that I will not be contented with this little, but I will labour to have as much of it as I can: more love, O, more love! never, never, never too much of that.

Sixthly, If you would grow in Grace, look to your union with Chriſt; He is the head, and you are the members, if you are Beleevers: Now, the body grows by influence from the head. Truly, our growth, it ſprings up from union with Chriſt; *If you abide in me, and my words abide in you*, then it ſhall be well, if ſo be that you hold the head: 'Tis an excellent expreſſion you have in 2 *Colloſ.* the Apoſtle uſeth that expreſſion, *of holding the head*; by vertue of which holding the head, there comes to be an increaſing with all the *increaſe of God*: When thou art well skilled in this myſterie of holding the head, in a dependance upon Chriſt, drawing every day from the Lord Jeſus, not contenting himſelf with what he hath received, but is ſtill drawing and ſucking from ~~Chriſt~~, the breaſts of Chriſt. He is in the proper way of proficiency, and improvement in Grace. Theſe are not empty notions; no, they are the things of the ſpirit of God; the ſpirit of Wiſdom doth ſuggeſt them to you, and therefore let them be accordingly regarded and heeded by you.

Seventhly, your duty is, to grow, and to grow in Grace: In order to that, I will tell you what will be a a good conducement; labour to make it ſure that you have

have Grace in the truth of it, and be very much in that inquiry into your ſelves; ſo, as that you may be clear in this, that you have the true Grace of God in you; that it is the true Grace of God wherein you ſtand. This is a good conducement to proficiency, and growth in Grace, when you come to know that there is a work begun: For mark you, if ſo be that a man be about a building, and do queſtion whether the foundation be well laid yea or no; truly, he can never go on ſo clearly, and ſo dexterouſly in the carrying on of the building. But if ſo be that he be well perſwaded, ſufficiently ſatisfied concerning this, that the foundation is well laid; this will ſtrengthen his hands for to go on in the work. — If ſo be that a man be upon a journey, and queſtion whether he be in the right way or no; he hath begun the journey, and he is doubting whether he be in the right way yea or no; this will put him to a puzzel, and make him to be fluctuating, and heſitating; had I beſt go on, I doubt whether I be in the right way yea or no? this will cauſe ſlackneſs of his motion; but if he be ſure that he is in the way, this will be much to the incouraging of him to make a further progreſs. So if I find, and am ſure that this be the right way, that I have Grace in the truth of it; this will cauſe us to labour after the growth in Grace.

Eighthly, You are to be upon the Faithful and diligent exerciſe of what you have: The reaſon why we have no more Faith is, becauſe we are not more upon the exerciſe of that Faith which we have: We ſpeak of truſting in God; Alas, how few are there of us, that do any thing to purpoſe in the exerciſe of our truſt, and be-

leeving? exerciſing Faith upon Chriſt, and upon the Covenant of God in Chriſt, concerning pardon of ſin, ſanctification: why, for want of exerciſing what Grace we have already received; we improve no more; — the promiſe is a faithful promiſe, and God will be true to it; *He that hath, to him ſhall be given*: He that hath, — what's that? he that hath, and uſeth; for we muſt needs underſtand it in that ſenſe: He ſpeaks of the man that had the Talent, and had imployed it, had gain'd five talents; he had imployed his talent, ſaith Chriſt, give him the other talent; for to him that hath, that is, that hath, and doth uſe, and imploy what he hath, to him ſhall be given. If we would now but ſet our ſelves ſeriouſly, and conſideringly upon this buſineſs, and exerciſe, and imploy what Grace God hath given, we may be confident of it, that God will come in with the inlargeings of his ſpirit.

Ninthly, Our duty is, in order to growth in Grace; to be conſtant in our attendance upon ſuch means which God hath appointed for ſuch a purpoſe; Word, and Miniſtry, and other Goſpel-ordinances, as we lye fair for the injoyment of them. Truly, theſe means are provided for this very purpoſe, that Chriſtians may grow: God hath ſet up a miniſtry in the World, not only to bring perſons, that were ſtrangers to Grace, to the participation of it; but that, being brought to partake of Grace, they may come to be increaſed in Grace: Chriſt aſcended up on high, and gave gifts unto men, for the *perfecting* of the Saints, as well as for the *planting* of the Saints: and this is our duty, when we have found the power of the Goſpel upon our hearts, to bring us from dark-

darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God; When we have found the efficacy of the ordinances to begin Grace, our duty is to attend them ſtill; that that Grace being begun, may by the ſame means, be increaſed unto ~~the day of~~ perfection. This is the will of God, and we may be confident of this, that when Chriſtians come to Gods means, propounding Gods ends, (mark what I ſay) and accordingly, wiſely, judiciouſly, and conſcientiouſly applying to the means, to ſuch ends and purpoſes; they may be confident of it, that God will come in with a bleſſing: for God doth delight to crown his own means, to proſper his own preſcriptions; he loves to ſee his meat that he gives his children, to prove their nouriſhment, their phyſick to promote their health; God loves to ſee his means that he provides for the good of ſouls, to ſee them ſucceſful. Conſider, can you think ſo diſhonourably of God, of the moſt bleſſed God; that he ſhould provide a Miniſtry, continue it in the World, continue his people in their attendance upon it? what, meerly that they might keep on in a formalizing courſe, and be never the better. Or, can we think ſo diſhonourably of God, as, that he would go and tye us to hear, and attend the Miniſtry of his Goſpel, and Grace, and withhold his bleſſing, while we do conſcienciouſly and judiciouſly apply our ſelves to ſuch means? — Can we think ſo diſhonourably of God, as that he will ſuſpend his working? Ah Brethren! the Lord delights to meet them with his bleſſing, that remember him in his waies: Do but think of that paſſage in *Iſa.* 64. and look that Text full in the face, and hear what it ſpeaks to you; *Thou meetest him that rejoyceth, and worketh righteouſneſs; thoſe*

that

that remember thee in thy waies: mark it, Thou meetest them; — to what purpose? — why, to prosper them, to command thy blessing upon them. I, undoubtedly, if we did but propound this to our selves, when we come to attend the Ordinances; think thus with our selves, why God hath set up this Ministry in the World, that his peoples souls might prosper, that they might thrive, that they might grow rich, that they might improve in Knowledge, and Faith, and Holyness, and Love, (and the like;) God hath given this, that there might be the perfecting of the Saints, the perfecting of my Soul. I go to this means, I attend this Ministry, and I will attend in expectation of a blessing of God upon it; I will wait upon God, and I will expect his blessing, and reckon upon it, that I shall be the better for these means; 'tis God's means, and he loves to be found in his own way, and to bless and prosper his own appointments. Oh, this is that would conduce exceeding much to proficiency in Faith and Godlyness, if we would but go this way to work. But I tell you, Friends, our formality spoyls us; it's a most lamentable thing to consider, what formalizing spirits many of us have: Will you but mind this that I say? I would I might not have that occasion that sometimes we have in the way of our preaching, to speak to such a purpose; people come together, and profess to pray, (as that's one part of our publick ministry;) yet, how many are there of you, that scarce ever close with one petition in a whole prayer; your eyes are wandering, and thoughts are roving. Do not your consciences tell you, that of a truth, you make nothing of this duty? but you can gaze, and wander, and look this way, and that way, and

diſcover to others an unfixed heart, and that you mind not the buſineſs that you are tranſacting. What's this, but formalizing? as if we came to ſet out a prayer, and not to bear a part in prayer.——— And ſo for hearing; with what a formalizing ſpirit are we many times? we can hear, as if we were not at all concerned in any thing that's ſpoken; never conſidering of the ordinances in reference to God, as that that hath the ſtamp of his Authority upon it: O this, if the Lord be not the more merciful, it will be the ruine of our ſouls, *This Plague Formality.* We have got a courſe of going to Church, (as you uſe to ſay) and keep on a courſe, and go in account for profeſſors; but in the mean time, the heart little with God, if any thing at all, not raiſed up to God, not ſet to injoyment of God, and of holding communion with the Lord Jeſus, never come to ſettle upon this thought; why, this is Gods means, that he hath provided for my improving in Faith and Godlineſs. I do profeſs, for my own part, I do not know, in all the World, what to ſpeak more to the purpoſe, as touching this Agument, which is an Argument, that doth moſt neerly concern all that are partakers of the Grace of the Lord Jeſus, for to look after.

10. Your duty is, to grow in Grace: Now, that you may do ſo, I would offer this to your conſideration; (Do but rationally weigh theſe things that I now offer to you;) You that have Grace, your duty is, to grow in Grace; That you may do ſo, ſtudy Heaven, and the Glory that is to be revealed: I tell you, I look upon it, as that that is beyond all controverſie, that well raiſed apprehenſions of Heaven, the Glorious eſtate there, will make

make us to put ſpurs to it, and ſet on with diligence and care. If we did but know the interpretation of Heaven, what Heaven is; we get a notion of Heaven, but know not what it is; what it is to be in Heaven, what it is to injoy God in Glory, what it is to be with Chriſt and Angels; what it is to be in the poſſeſſion of thoſe bleſſed manſions above! If we did but ſtudy Heaven more, certainly, it would make us put on with more diligence, look about us, and ſet us upon a vigorous performance of Grace, and that we may increaſe in it. Conſider a little, — you that have Grace; you are entituled to Heaven, 'tis your inheritance, the portion which your Father hath ſet out for you: I, but what is this Inheritance? — It is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away. — There is in Heaven the viſion of God, the moſt Glorious God; — There is a Communion, an everlaſting Communion with God, and with the Lamb, a following of the Lamb for evermore. — There is the injoyment of ſweeteſt communion with Chriſt, and with Angels, and glorified Saints: — There is ſuch Glory, as eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, it cannot enter into the heart of man to conceive: It is an amazing thing, what the ſtate of Heaven is! what the Glory that is there to be injoyed! — There is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore! If ſo be that a man would but think of this; O! is Heaven ſuch a place! ſuch a holy, pure place! is there ſo much of the Glory of God appearing there! This will make a man to argue thus with himſelf; Good Lord, what manner of perſon ſhould I be, that I may be fit for to come there, that I may be fit to ſet my foot upon that holy Ground! O, what manner

of perſon ought I to be! how ſhall I endeavour to be purged, and cleanſed, according to that which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in the 1 Epiſt. *Joh.* 3. ſaith he, *He that hath this hope in him, he purifies himſelf, as God is pure.* Such and ſuch a thing is Heaven, there is ſuch glory and beauty there, ſuch glorious objects to behold, and ſuch delights and pleaſures to be injoyed! what manner of perſon ought I to be, that I may be meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the Saints in light? Certainly, the thoughts of Heaven being well digeſted, will make us to ſet on, and be a conducement to an advance in Grace and Holineſs.

11. Laſtly, your duty is, to grow in Grace: Suppoſe you have it in the beginnings of it; O, bleſs God for what you have; but withal, *pray* that you may have more: *Prayer doth not obtain the firſt Grace*: You do not get the firſt Grace by prayer; for a man cannot pray, to ſpeak of prayer according to the proper uſe of it; there's no man can pray till he have Grace. There may be ſomething done in the ſtrength of a common conviction; a perſon, that's convinc'd of his curſed eſtate, and terrified upon the conviction and apprehenſion; he may come to ſend out ſome kind of deſires; O, I would it were better with me for all that; I ſee my condition is very bad, and ſad, and naught: But a true deſire after Grace, cannot be, till there be ſomething of Grace in truth. The firſt Grace, it comes not upon our prayer; but to be ſure, the after Grace is to be fetch'd in in the way, and by the means of prayer; and therefore we are to ply the Throne of Grace, as the Apoſtle exhorts, *Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace*; Throne of Grace, to the God of Grace, *that we may obtain*

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mercy, and find Grace; that we may find more Grace, *Heb.* 4. O Lord, thou haſt ſtil'd thy ſelf a God of Grace; and thou haſt made a Covenant of Grace; and thou haſt ordered out thy Son, as a Fountain full of Grace; and thou haſt made promiſes of Grace: O Lord, beſtow more Grace; O Lord, hold not thy hand: the Diſciples, they cry out, *O Lord, increaſe our Faith*: the poor man in the Goſpel, breaks out with tears, *Lord, I believe, O Lord, help my unbelief.* Lord, I have a little love to thee, O, let my love increaſe; Lord, let my Faith increaſe; Lord, let my Holineſs be more and more increaſed; Lord, let there be more and more: You have a promiſe, *Open thy mouth wide, I will fill it.* Theſe things now I have ſuggeſted to you, and have endeavoured to commend them in as preſſing a way as I can, that ſo you may perform your duty, as touching growth in Grace.

I would now have ſpoken ſomething by way of encouraging Argumeuts; only thus at preſent.

I would have you to conſider what a mercy it is, that God will make this the matter of your duty; you, that are gracious perſons, upon whom he hath beſtowed any Grace: what a mercy of God it is, that he ſhould make this one of your duties, and require this of you as a point of duty, that you ſhould grow in Grace: as if a great man ſhould ſay to a poor, one that he hath ſet his love upon, Friend, I have freely given thee 100 *l.* as a ſtock to begin the World, now, go thy waies, and imploy this 100 *l.* and ſee what improvement thou canſt make of it: and I require this of thee, that thou do advance in thy eſtate; and if thou needeſt 100 *l.* more, or three or four hundred pound more,

come to me, and I will ſupply thee ſtill; for I would have thee to grow rich: you would think this were a high act of courteſie and kindneſs, if a man ſhould do ſo: Friend, I charge you, ſee that you grow rich; you have ſo much in ſtock, and I will ſupply you ſtill with more and more: but only do you look to this, that you grow rich. Thus God doth in reſpect of Grace. Indeed, he doth not deal thus with us, as to the World: there are many, they will be rich in the World, and they decree, and reſolve upon it, that they will be rich; I, ſometimes, whether God will or no. They carry the matter, as if they would be rich whether God will or no. They would be rich, rich in the World, and they have no warrant, for God hath not required this of any man, that they ſhould grow rich in the World: He requires they ſhould do their duty; and if he will come in with a bleſſing, ſo; they ought to be thankful: but he doth not command them to be rich in the World; but there are, that will be rich, and reſolve to be rich, and ſo they run themſelves into ſnares and temptations, and many hurtful and noyſome luſts, that drown mens ſouls in deſtruction. I, but here's the Grace of God to his poor ſervants; His will is, that they ſhould be rich in Grace, and he doth encourage thereunto, by promiſing that he will proſper you in your way: He hath given you ſuch a ſtock, he will give you more, provided that you do but your duty; and it is his mercy, that he hath made it the matter of your duty, to grow in Grace.

2. And then reckon upon this for your encouragement, and the quickening of you in your endeavours this way: To be ſure, grow as much

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as you can, you will never grow too good for God; you can never have too much Grace, you can never have too much Faith, nor Love, nor Holineſs; Godlineſs knows no bounds: You can never have too much of God, and Chriſt, and Holineſs. When the fooliſh Virgins ſaw themſelves at a loſs, as touching their oyle, and come to the wiſe, to buy of them; nay, ſay they, ſpare us there, we have none to part withal, we will keep what we have gotten, leſt we ſhould not have enough for us and you. And ſo make account of this, that when you have grown as high in Grace as you can, you will have no over-pluſs, you will have none to ſpare.

SERM. VIII.

IT is God's great mercy, that there are any in the World which have any Grace in them, and that God ſhould make ſuch a pleaſant and precious plant to take root, and ſpring up in ſuch a ſoyl as the ſoul is, ſo barren of all good, and ſo unapt to receive any good. Now, as it is God's mercy that any have Grace; ſo it is their duty that have it, for to grow in it: and this duty you have been over and over charged with. But I ſhall now come to what remains to be ſpoken concerning this Argument, which I ſhall give a brief account of; and then come to what follows in the Text.

2. The further encouragements unto the lively and vigorous proſecution of this matter; a ſtre-

nuous endeavour to grow in Grace; the incouragements, they are very great; and I desire that you may know the force, and power, and vertue of them in your own hearts.

3. If so be that you do indeed make it your business, and do endeavour this, to grow in Grace, and shall do so, (as you are very like to do it, if you endeavour after it,) you will have this advantage, you will not be altogether so apt to be unsetled in your apprehensions concerning your state; you will not be so much upon the questioning point concerning the truth and reality of the Grace of God in you, as many are: when you come to be of some considerable growth in Grace, when you come to have much Faith, and much Love, and much Holyness, much of the Fear of God, you will not be so apt to be questioning the point, and fluctuating in your souls concerning your Grace; but you will be able to bear up against temptations of that kind, and ready to make your confident avouchments, and say, if you be questioned about your *Faith*; *Yea Lord, thou knowest I do believe.*— Be questioned about your *Love*, as *Peter* was, *Simon*, lovest thou me? *Yea Lord, thou knowest I love thee.* And truly, this is a great advantage that will come over to us by improvement in Grace; for the truth, and soundness of Grace, it doth appear by its growth: it is a clear demonstration that a plant lives, when it grows: it may live, and yet there be no discovery of its growth; but when there is a growth, there is a plain demonstration, that the plant is alive: and this benefit will come over, by growing in Grace. And, while poor weaklings in Grace, that are of low attainments, and are apt to please them-

themſelves in their lower meaſures, will be apt to be ſhaken by every wind of temptation, and be put upon the queſtioning point upon every occaſion, whether there be any Grace in them, yea or no. They that have but a little Faith, a little Grace; they will be apt ever and anon, to be fluctuating in their ſpirits, and doubting within themſelves, whether there be any thing of God, and Chriſt, and Grace in them. Well-grown Chriſtians, will be able to bear up with a holy confidence, that of a truth, the Grace of God is in them.

4. This incouragement we have to endeavour a growth in Grace; God will be the more glorified, Chriſt will be the more magnified, the Goſpel will be the more credited; the more we have of Grace, we ſhall be able to quit our ſelves honourably in our way of duty, in our way of ſuffering: Herein is our Father Glorified, that we have much fruit, and bring forth much fruit.

5. God will glory in ſuch, and make his boaſt of them, as he did of *Job*; Do'ſt thou not ſee my ſervant *Job*, that there is not a man like him in the earth, an upright, and a perfect man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil? The Lord doth make a holy boaſt of his eminent ſervant, that was ſo raiſed up in Grace, and Holyneſs: And you know what our Saviour ſpeaks concerning the woman of *Canaan*; *O woman, great is thy Faith! be it unto thee, even as thou wilt.* Truly, there is very much in that to conſider of: men and women of advanced Faith and Grace; O! how Chriſt doth Glory in them! and what is it that he can deny them? *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt*; draw

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thy requeſts, and I will under-write them, I will ſay *amen* to them: what, can God deny a ſoul that is improved in Grace? of all others, ſuch are like to have the higheſt communications from God: for this we may well think, that God will order out his communications of mercy and comfort to his people, according to their capacities; the larger the veſſel is, the more liquor it takes in, and accordingly, the more ſhall there be communicated unto it. Narrow hearts are like to have but little, becauſe they can receive but little; they are little in capacity, and are like to be accordingly; but little in the communication that ſhall be made unto them.

6. This will be our encouragement to endeavour a growth in Grace; we ſhall by this means credit the Goſpel, credit the Ordinances, encourage the Miniſtry, and ſtrengthen the hands of thoſe that are faithful in their work; whoſe ambition ſhould be to ſee thoſe that wait upon God in the way of Miniſtry, to be improving, and thriving, and growing Heaven-ward: O, how much is it to the honour of the Goſpel, and to the credit of the Miniſtry, and encouragement of the ſervants of Chriſt; when they can ſee thoſe that wait upon God in their way, to be upon an improvement. It's the comfort of a Nurſe, to ſee the child thrive and proſper; it's the comfort of a Miniſter, to ſee the people that wait upon his Miniſtry, to be increaſed with the increaſe of God; better'd by every Sermon, better'd by every Ordinance that is diſpenc'd unto them: Surely, if *Paul* were on earth, and had to deal with ſuch kind of perſons, that were good proficients, he would glory in them, and make his boaſt of them: ſo he doth of the *Theſſalonians*,

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in the 2 Epiſt. 1 Chap. where having ſpoken of them, of their Faith, and Charity; we glory in you, (ſaith he) in the Churches of Chriſt.

7. Conſider thus for incouragement, for an endeavouring after a growth in Grace; ſuch perſons are not ſo likely to be ſtartled and affrighted, and unſetled upon occaſion of amazing, terrifying, and aſtoniſhing providences: and when there are frowns in the face of providences, which others are not well able to behold; improved ſouls, ſuch as are well underlaid with Grace, and are of a conſiderable growth, they are of all others, the moſt likely to bear up with courage and confidence, and holy reſolution, and to out-face all difficulties and dangers; and to ſay, as the three Children, O King, we are not careful to anſwer thee in this matter. When poor weaklings are apt to flye before an enemy, and to ſhrink at the ſight of a trouble, and to have their hearts deſponding, and fall down within them; well improved ſouls, that are advanc'd in Grace, they are likely to bear up with courage and confidence, and to behave themſelves as *Caleb* did: when others of the ſearchers were ſent to ſee the Land, their hearts begin to fail them at the ſons of *Anack*; Come, ſaith *Joſhua*, let not us fear them, they are *bread* for us, we ſhall feed upon them, they ſhall do us no hurt, their ſtrength is departed from them, and the Lord is with us, to work out ſalvation for us. Such a man is one that God would glory in, that will not ſtartel at troubles when they faſten on him, but bears up with reſolution of ſpirit; and ſuch are like to do ſo; that are well improved in Grace, as *Caleb* was.

8. Con-

8. Consider this, that if you do grow, and increase; you are likely, when you come to dye; to dye with the greatest comfort, and joy, and boldness towards God. Truly, we may well think, that those that have the greatest Faith, and the greatest Love, and the greatest measure of Holyness, they are like to dye with the greatest comfort and triumph. I do not say that it is alwaies so; God may, and doth, it's like, sometimes, for ends and purposes best known to himself, suffer some of his most eminent Saints for to dye, and pass away, not altogether with that splendor, and with those clear apprehensions of his Love; sometimes he is pleased so to order out for holy purposes. But we may well think, that in all probability, they that have gotten the most Grace, are like to have the greatest comfort in the day of death; and according to their sowing, so shall their reaping be: they having sown plentifully, when the Harvest comes; truly, they shall be sure to reap plentifully.

9. Consider this; That whereas it's said, that Christ, in the day of Judgement, will come to be admired in all them that do believe: Surely, he will be most of all admired in them that have been most in their beleeving of him; — he will be most admired in them that have done most in their advances and improvements in Faith and Godlyness. And truly, these things being duly considered, they may be well reckoned upon as so many incentives and provocations to this duty which we are charged withal in the Text; that we do endeavour, to grow in Grace. And, if there be any that are able to give any good account of their improvement, and increasing, through

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the bleſſing of God upon them; if any of you can find that you have been made to increaſe, and that there is a growth in Grace; you may know it, and your duty is, to make a thankful acknowledgement of it: As *David* doth, in *Pſal.* 138. *In the day when I cried, thou anſwered'ſt me, and ſtrengthened'ſt me with ſtrength in my ſoul.* Truly, we ſhould be willing and free to acknowledge the incomes of God, and the increaſes of God in us; and how the Lord is pleaſed for to bring us on from a lower meaſure to a higher, and to give us an advance in Faith and Godlyneſs. Truly, we ſhould take knowledge of it, and be free to make acknowledgement of it, to the glory and praiſe of Him that is the giver of all. And for ſuch of you as are above, that are of a higher ſtature than others of your Brethren, that are better grown Chriſtians, more improved in Knowledge, in Faith, in Holyneſs, in Love, in Godlyneſs, and Grace; to ſuch of you, I have only this to ſay:

Firſt of all, conſider, that all you have, is of free donation; your firſt Grace, and your ſecond Grace; the firſt degrees, and the after-degrees; they are all of Grace; and therefore your duty is, to attribute nothing to your ſelves, but to give the Glory of all to God: *By the Grace of God, I am that I am*, ſaith *Paul*. If ſo be that I have more Faith than my Brother, more Grace, more Knowledge, more Holyneſs; I have no reaſon to boaſt of it; I have much reaſon to bleſs God for it, but not to boaſt; for what have I, that I have not received? I have received the firſt Grace: and my endeavours have been uſed, & put forth to ſuch a purpoſe; yet it is not ſo much to be reckoned to

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my endeavour, as to the bleſſing of God upon my endeavours; and ſo God in all, is to be glorified; in all, and for all; for the firſt Grace, and for the after Grace; for the beginnings of Grace, and for the increaſes of Grace: O, the God of Grace is to be magnified, and we are to carry it very humbly; to take heed of any proud ſwellings of heart, becauſe you may come to be above your Brethren, taller than they by head and ſhoulders: do not over-look weaker Brethren, but carry it humbly, and tenderly towards them; as the Apoſtle ſaith, *We that are ſtrong, ought to bear with the infirmities of the weak*: this is a becoming thing for a well-grown Saint, to carry it with all meekneſs and tenderneſs, and in all lowlyneſs of mind towards thoſe that are his inferiors, and ſhort of him, in reſpect of his ſpiritual ſtature in Chriſt: Deſpiſe not, O, deſpiſe not the ſmall things in others; if God have given you a larger meaſure of his Spirit and Grace; but rather improve your ſtrength for them that have not come to your pitch: if ſo be that you be ſtronger than they, let them have the benefit of your ſtrength, knowing that they have an intereſt in your Graces; and they ſhould have the fruit and benefit of them together with you.

And then withal, ſuch as may be improved in Grace, and of a good growth, let ſuch yet for all that, not reſt in that which they have attained; but ſtill (as *Paul* profeſſeth concerning himſelf) be forgetting what is behind, and reaching out to that which is before, preſſing towards the mark; becauſe whatſoever you have, yet you may have more; and till you be perfect in Chriſt, you muſt never ceaſe your endeavours, but be ſtill preſſing

ſing on after larger meaſures, and that you may come to your perfection, and to the full ſtature that you are appointed to in Chriſt.

And then withal, reckon upon this as your duty; ſuch as are well grown in Grace and Godlyneſs; do not reckon upon it, that you will now have freedom from temptations; nay, rather look for the greater temptations, becauſe that God doth uſually lay the greateſt burthens upon the ſtrongeſt ſhoulders, Weaker Chriſtians, they ſhall have their temptations proportionable to their ſtrength: men of greater ſtrength and abilities in Grace, muſt reckon upon it to be put the harder to it, and to have the greater tryals, conſidering that they have received a greater meaſure of Grace than others have.

And now Beloved, I have done with this point, wherein I have been ſomewhat large, and have laid out the beſt of my endeavour, ~~that I might be ſo diſcours,d of~~, as that you might come to be the more benefited by what I have had to ſpeak.—

You have heard, that they that have Grace, it is required of them, and charged upon them, that they be upon their growth. Now remember, O remember, that this is the charge of God upon you; you, that are the ſons and daughters of Grace, that are called of God to the participation of Grace, remember that this is your duty, and God doth require it of you. O now, ſhall all that hath been preached to you from one morning to another, paſs away? Let me but put it to your Conſciences now; truly, I am apt to think, that in the carrying on of this Diſcourſe concerning growth in Grace; I am apt to think, that there are

are ſome of you, how many, I know not: But I am apt to think, that there are of you, that have had ſome convincement upon your Conſciences; and that you may have cauſe to ſmite upon your hearts, and to ſay, O wretch that I am, that I ſhould be no better in Grace, that my eſtate in Grace ſhould be ſo low! I am apt to think, that you have had ſome touches upon your ſpirits, upon this account; — and that withal, you have been upon ſome reſolves to ſet upon the buſineſs, and to endeavour a growth to a higher degree; and that you may be better Chriſtians than you have been. I am apt to think, that you have had ſome movings upon your hearts; hath it been ſo, and will you let the cauſe fall again? will you pleaſe your ſelves? nay, dare you pleaſe your ſelves in your lower meaſure, having been convinc'd, and awakened, and made to apprehend what a bleſſed thing it is, to be upon increaſes with the increaſe of God? Hearing ſo much incouragement, what incouragement there is to endeavour a growth in Grace; dare you let this matter fall down again, and your hearts flag within, and not ſet to it with all your might; that you might come to be improved Chriſtians? I beſeech you, conſider well of it, and know, that God, he takes notice of every meſſage that he ſends unto you, of every Sermon that he provides to be preached unto you: And, O that this were but well conſidered, that the Great God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, they have an eye upon us, and obſerve how we carry our ſelves after we have heard ſuch a Sermon, ſuch a duty; God takes notice whether we walk in any ſuitableneſs to what is urged, and charged upon us. I tell you Brethren, that God will not be complemented withal;

O;

O, will we make it a matter of meer complement, to come early in a morning, and hear a Sermon, and when we have heard it, go away; and when we have had our task ſet us, never ſet about it. Truly, give me leave to ſay this to you; you that are Maſters and Miſtreſſes, you would not very well like a ſervant, if he ſhould only give you the hearing; when you come, and lay him out his work, and ſay, my ſervant, this buſineſs I would have done, and that buſineſs I would have done, and your ſervant is preſent with you, and gives you very patient hearing, and doth privately attend to your charge; but when you have given your command, and laid your charge upon your ſervant, and ſaid, I require this of you, that you do ſuch a piece of ſervice at ſuch a time; this is the work of this day; and when they have given you the hearing, they go away, and never ſet about their buſineſs, nay, ſcarce ever think of it after; I know you would not like well of ſuch a ſervant, but think him more fit to be turned out of your ſervice, for to go and ſlight all that you require of them, and charge upon them in way of duty and ſervice. Why, can you think in your Conſciences, that God will take content in ſuch kind of ſervants that come to attend upon him, and to receive his charge, and have the ſignification made to them of their duty; as our Saviour ſaith, you call me Lord and Maſter, and you ſay well, for ſo I am. Now, you come here, and hear the will of your Lord; and among other things, he requires this of you, that you ſet upon this great work, of growth in Grace: Now, if you come to the Ordinances, and hear what his good will and pleaſure is concerning Faith; and when you go away, nei-

ver regard what your duty is, nor what your Maſter requires of you; but you let all alone, and reſt in your hearing, and never go about the work and buſineſs that is required of you; do you think that God and Chriſt will be well pleaſed with this? O, is it likely that Chriſt will ſay to you, in the great day of account; Well done, good and Faithful ſervant, faithful ſervant, faithful ſervant? why, this was all, thou gaveſt me the hearing, but thou did'ſt not go about my buſineſs. I tell you Brethren, our Preaching will come in as a witneſs againſt you; and your hearing will be to your greater condemnation: And therefore I beſeech you, that you would not receive the Grace of God in vain. And ſo I have given now a diſpatch unto this part of the Text, which concerns Growth in Grace.

The next thing that follows to be conſidered of, is this;

Grow in Grace; And in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Here we have to conſider of a further Inquiry, a further Command: Grow in Grace; Grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. And truly, I am apt to conceive, that there is a dependance of one upon the other; and that in order unto growth in Grace. Chriſtians and Beleevers, are required to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. This I conceive is intended in this conjunction, and connexion of theſe two Requiries: As if the Apoſtle ſhould have ſaid, *Grow in Grace*; and, that you may ſo do, *Grow in the knowledge of our Lord and*

and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now, before I come to the second observation, there is a question, which, I think, may be very properly moved, upon occasion of these two Requiries, thus ordered out in the Text. This Question (I say) I conceive, may be very fitly moved. When the Apostle requires that there be a growth in Grace; then he comes to require a growth in Knowledge.

It may be questioned from hence; Is not *Knowledge Grace?* and doth not the Apostle require a growth in Knowledge, when he requires a growth in Grace? why should he make this a distinct requiry from the former? May not we conceive that Knowledge is a Grace; and then requiring growth in Grace, he requires growth in Knowledge?

A little to answer this: First, I would say thus, That it's not to be questioned, but that Knowledge is a *Gift*, and a gift that is very highly to be accounted of: But every *Gift* is not a *Grace*. Indeed, every *Grace* is a *Gift*; but every Gift is not a Grace: understanding by Grace (as usually it is to be taken) that Grace, which is a fruit and effect of Election; a fruit and effect of special Love; understanding by Grace, sanctifying, and saving Grace: so every Gift is not a Grace: every Gift may be called a Grace in this sense, as it comes from Grace, from common Grace: it's a common Grace, that God doth bestow meat and drink upon us; it's a common Grace and favour of God, that gives us meat to eat, cloathing to put on; that he gives us the use of Reason, that he gives us common Understanding, that we may carry our selves like men, like rational creatures; this is a common Gift, a common Grace: And so for knowledge, it

is a Gift; I, and it is a Gift that comes from common Grace, and a common Grace it may be reckoned to be.

But, if we ſpeak of ſpecial Grace, a diſtinguiſhing Grace, Grace that is to Salvation: Truly, ſo every Gift is not a Grace. And it's true concerning Knowledge; Knowledge is a Gift; and yet ſpeaking of Grace ſtrictly, Knowledge is not a Grace. But only we muſt diſtinguiſh of Knowledge.

There is a more common Knowledge; there is a notional Knowledge, a Knowledge of an inlightned underſtanding, eradicated by the common light of the ſpirit, by a common work of the ſpirit; I ſay, that this is not a Grace: this (as you ſhall hear) may be had, and yet perſons may periſh for all this, and damn eternally: they may go down well accompliſh'd (as to their Knowledge) to hell.

But then, there is a Knowledge, that is not only a *brain*-Knowledge, but a *heart*-Knowledge; *I will give them a heart to know me.* Truly, there's Grace there: to be ſure, if the Knowledge be not Grace, yet there's Grace in the Knowledge, and with the Knowledge: When God gives a man a heart to know him, that's a Covenant-bleſſing, and of Covenant-conveyance; and it's a conveyance to none but thoſe that have a ſpecial favour: but otherwiſe, Knowledge in it ſelf conſidered, though it be a Gift, yet not a Grace: For, mark you;

Firſt of all, you have had many knowing perſons (as I was ſaying) that were never partakers of the Grace of God, true, ſaving Grace. *Balaam* prophecies of himſelf, that he was the man whoſe

eyes

eyes were opened, and he knew the viſions of God; *Balaam* ſpeaks it of himſelf, he was a man that had very much inſight in the myſteries of God, and the things that concern the Church of God, and the enemies of the Church; and yet a wretch, a covetous wretch, that periſhed in his way of covetouſneſs, and did diſcover a madneſs of ſpirit; the madneſs of his heart was eager in the purſuit of the waies of unrighteouſneſs: Thus *Balaam*, and yet a knowing man, his eyes were opened, he ſaw the viſions of God, he was acquainted with the counſels of God, and yet a very wretch, and fell at length under damnation. What was he the better for his Knowledge?

Perſons may know much; I, they may have *all Knowledge*, and yet for all that, they may be without Charity, without Love: ſo the Apoſtle, in 1 *Cor.* 13. ſaith he, Though I ſpeak with the tongues of Men and Angels; and, *though I have all Knowledge*, and have not Love, I am nothing, it profits me nothing. Now, by this it appears, that there is a Knowledge, that is another thing than Grace.

And then conſider, that Knowledge is that which a man may have, and be ſwelled, and puffed up with it; ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 8. We know that we have all Knowledge; *Knowledge* (ſaith he) *puffeth up*; Charity edifies; now, Grace doth not do ſo, Grace doth not puff up.

And then again, perſons may have Knowledge, and yet notwithſtanding all their Knowledge, after that they have eſcaped the pollutions of the World, they may come to be intangled again in their former corruptions, be brought again into their former woful bondage, and the latter end of them

may be worſe than ever their beginning was; ſo the Apoſtle, in 2 *Pet.* 2. ſaith he, If after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the World, *through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, (the beſt knowledge in the World,) they had this knowledge, and eſcaped the pollutions of the World, and they are intangled again, and overcome; the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning; for it had been better with them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandement delivered unto them. Here's clearly now, (according to this account the Apoſtle gives) held forth, that perſons may have the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: they may come to have ſuch a Knowledge, whereby they eſcape the pollutions of the World, and yet they may come to be intangled, and overcome; ſo that it may be worſe with them than ever it was before.

They may know the way of Righteouſneſs, and yet for all that, turn from the holy Commandement delivered to them; and ſo become like the *Dog*, to his vomit; and like the *Sow*, to her wallowing again in the mire. By all this (I ſay) it appears, that there is a Knowledge, and knowledge of the beſt things; Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour; and yet notwithſtanding, perſons may periſh, and periſh the more dreadfully.

And I add that place in *Heb.* 10. where the Apoſtle ſpeaks to this purpoſe; ſaith he, *If we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth; there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgement, and fiery Indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſaries.*

There

There may be a *receiving* of the knowledge of the truth, and yet a *wilful* ſinning, and ſo a fearful expectation, and nothing but that remaining for them; a fearful expectation of Judgement, and fiery Indignation. Now, all this conſidered,— Knowledg,- I, and knowledge of the beſt things,—it may be had; and yet perſons under the power of the Devil; — perſons, that after their eſcape from worldly intanglements, may be brought again into ſorer bondage; their latter end worſe than their beginning; and they may fall under the deep and more dreadful damnation.

Now, the improvement that we are to make of this, is only thus; O, let us take heed of reſting in our Knowledge, and bearing upon this, that we are knowing men, and knowing women, able to diſcourſe of the things of God, and the myſteries of Religion: O, take heed of this, conſidering what hath been now ſpoken to you, that you may have a great meaſure of Knowledge, and yet be meer ſtrangers unto ſaving Grace: far be it from me, to ſpeak a tittle to the diſparagement of Knowledge; but rather moſt vigorouſly to preſs your purſuance of it, and that you endeavour after it, (as I ſhall perform to that purpoſe afterwards) know, that *it is not good that the mind be without knowledge*, ſaith *Solomon*; nay, the heart cannot be good without Knowledge; you cannot *believe* without Knowledge, you cannot *pray* without Knowledge, you cannot *live* without Knowledge; you muſt have Knowledge, or elſe you will never be ſav'd: O *Ignorance*! it is of it ſelf a damning ſin: — only thus, — reſt not in your Knowledge; reſt not in this, that you have a light in your head, but look to it, that you have Grace in your hearts.—

Look to this that you know, and know to love;——and know ſo, as that you may believe,——and live: if you know theſe things (ſaith our SAVIOUR) happy are ye if you do them. If you know the truth, and know it in truth of heart, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *Since ye know the Grace of God in truth*, know it to be the truth, and know it in the truth of your hearts: O, this is that that we ſhould mind.

Truly, that you may know for practice; and the truth is, you know no more to purpoſe, than you know to practice. And it is of ſad conſideration, that which I have now to ſpeak unto you: it is of ſad conſideration, that that knowledge which men and women attain to of God, and Chriſt, and Goſpel-myſteries, if ſo be that it be not reduc'd to practice; if there be not a due improvement of it; if there be a *Science*, and not *Conſcience*: a Science, and not a Conſcience to make uſe of the knowledge: it is of ſad conſideration, that that I have now to ſay.

The day will come, when all the Knowledge that you have gotten of Chriſt, and of the myſteries of the Goſpel, of the Kingdom of God, that knowledge will turn upon you, and it will be to your everlaſting torment: O, tremble at the thought of it! This is the torment, and will eternally be the torment of the damned in Hell, that they had knowledge, great meaſures of knowledge, and yet notwithſtanding, did not improve their knowledge, did not reduce it to practice: they had

had light, but did not live up to their light: they knew the will of God, O, but they were not conſcientiouſly careful to perform and do the will of God. O this, this will be the torment; the Conſcience of a man will be an eternal fury to him, and it will everlaſtingly torment him; when it ſhall tell him, Did'ſt not thou know, that Chriſt was given to ſave ſinners, and to ſave from ſin? Did'ſt not thou know, that the Grace of God, that brings Salvation, it did teach to deny all ungodlyneſs, and worldly luſts? thou knoweſt this: thou knoweſt that it was thy duty to live thus and thus; to walk with God,— to deny thy ſelf,— to croſs thy corruptions: it was thy duty to ſtudy to approve thy ſelf to God, and to keep a clear Conſcience;--- It was thy duty to own Chriſt in an hour of temptation; did'ſt not thou know this to be thy duty? Conſcience will thus charge upon thee; and then you ſhall know it. O! how did this torment *Judas* on this ſide Hell, before he came there? Oh! I know my Maſter was an innocent perſon; and yet notwithſtanding, contrary to my knowledge, I went, and betrayed him into the hands of ſinners.—— O, how did this torment *Eſau* on this ſide Hell? he knew that the Birth-right, and the Bleſſing, were things to be highly valued: the temptation comes upon him, he was a little pinch'd with hunger, and *Jacob* takes the advantage (there was a myſterie of Providence in it) of his exigence, and gets away his Birth-right from him: But when the time comes that the Bleſſing was gone; then *Eſau* knows.

O,

O, this knowledge torments him, that he knew the Birth-right, what it was, and how it ought to be accounted of; and yet notwithstanding, he past it away for a trifle: O, Conscience will torment another day: when a man shall come to have his knowledge set a work; I know that Christ was a precious Christ; — that Grace, it was better than Gold; I had conviction upon my Conscience, and yet notwithstanding, I chose the World rather than Christ; I preferred my lusts and corruptions before the Lord Jesus: I knew this to be my duty, but I made no conscience of performing my duty. Well, the Lord set these things home upon every one of us, and that we may be wise for our souls, and take heed of resting in what we know; but look to it, that we have such a Knowledge as is accompanied with Grace; such a Knowledge as is sanctified to us by Grace. And this now I speak upon occasion of this Question.

SERM.

SERM. IX.

2 Pet. 3. 18. *And in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt.*

THree things ſeem to lye in the Text.

First, that it is God's will, and Saints duty; As to grow in *Grace*, ſo, to grow in *Knowledge*.

2. That it is the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, which is the ſpecial Knowledge wherein Saints and Beleevers ought to grow.

3. They that mind growth in Grace, muſt in order thereunto, endeavour a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt.

First of all, it is the good will of God, and a Saints duty, to grow in Knowledge. God would have his people to be a knowing people, a well-knowing people: God doth take no pleaſure in a people that pretend to Him, and profeſs his Name, and are yet under a black vail of ignorance; they are not a people for His purpoſe.

Beleevers, they are ſaid to be *light*; you were ſometimes darkneſs, but now are ye *light* in the Lord. The light of a Beleever, it ſhould be a *growing* light; he ſhould be like the Sun, that ſhines out more and more unto the perfect day.

It

It is not enough to *know*, but it is our duty to *follow on* to know: you have that expreſſion in *Hoſ. 6. Then ſhall we know, if we follow on to know* the Lord. It's not enough to *begin* to know, to ſet foot upon the way of knowledge; but we muſt *travel on* in that way; *follow on* to know the Lord.

This was that which the Apoſtle *Paul* doth earneſtly pray for in the behalf of the Church of *Coloſ.* Chap. 1. ver. 9. *That they might be filled in the knowledge of his will, in all wiſdom, and ſpiritual underſtanding*; and *that they might be fruitful, and walk in all well-pleaſing, increaſing in the knowledge of God.* This is the will of God, and this is the duty of a Saint, and Beleever.

I ſpeak of *growth in Knowledge*; you will underſtand it to be meant of Divine Knowledge, Religious Knowledge. There is a knowledge of humane things; a knowledge of Arts and Sciences; knowledge and skill in myſteries and trades; knowledge in civil affairs; a knowledge that concerns worldly negotiations, and tranſactions of affairs in Kingdoms and Nations here below. But this, though it be a uſeful knowledge in its kind; yet this is not the knowledge that we have now under conſideration: but it is a Divine Knowledge, a Scripture Knowledge, a Knowledge of the things of God, and that concern Religion: and in ſuch Knowledge, it is our duty to endeavour a growth.

And it may very well be required of thoſe that do know, that they ſtill know more and more; that they that have any Knowledge, ſhould endeavour a growth in that Knowledge: in general, this reaſon may well paſs for it. We do know

but

but in part, when we know at the moſt: when we have the moſt of Knowledge, yet alas, how little is it that we know, in compariſon of what is to be known? I remember there is an expreſſion to ſuch a purpoſe, in *Job*, how little a matter is known of God? and of the things of God? Ah! Oh little, that truly gracious ſouls have been, and will be apt to be much in ſad complaining, that they know ſo little as they do. I find the holy man, in *Prov.* 30. complaining there; O, ſaith he, *I have not in me the underſtanding of man; I have not* (ſaith he) *attained the knowledge of the holy: So fooliſh was I,* (ſaith another) *and ignorant, I was even as a beaſt before thee.* Such complaints holy men have powred out before the Lord: therefore, being we know but in part, and it is ſuch an inconſiderable part that we have of knowledge; that truly, it may well be required of us, that we endeavour a growth.—— But I ſhall offer to you, (and yet but briefly, becauſe I drive at the next things moſt ſpecially) ſome further conſiderations; which, if you do but well and ſeriouſly ponder, you will ſee ſtrong reaſon to indear Knowledge, and to endeavour a growth in Knowledge.

Firſt of all, (beſides the general account that I have given you, that we know but in part: but now thus more particularly;) The more that we grow in Knowledge, the more ſhall we reſemble God; for God is a God of Knowledge; that's the title that is given him, in 1 *Sam.* 2. *The Lord is a God of Knowledge*; and he then accounts his people to be in a due reſemblance of him, when

when they come to be a knowing people: the Image of God, it is conſiſtent in *Knowledge*, as well as in Righteouſneſs, and Grace. The Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning the *renewing of the mind*, which is renewed after God, in *Knowledge*; and we never come to reſemble God as we ought, unleſs we come to be a people well furniſhed with the Knowledge of God, and the things of God.

2. I add this further; it may well be required, that there be a growth in Knowledge, becauſe it is a part of the rich treaſure which is laid up in Chriſt, for the inrichment of the ſouls of his redeemed ones. The Apoſtle tells us, that *in Chriſt are hid all the treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*; ſo that *Knowledge* is one part of the rich treaſure which is hid in Chriſt; and the more we grow in *Knowledge*, the larger ſhare we have in that rich treaſure that is in Chriſt. Reaſon then there is, that there ſhould be an endeavouring of a growth in Knowledge.

3. And then add yet further, the more we grow in Knowledge, the more able ſhall we be to diſcern of ſin, and make a judgement upon that. How often are thoſe things that are no ſins, judged to be ſins; and thoſe things that are ſins, judged to be none at all? And whence is it, but through a defectiveneſs in Knowledge? Sometimes, and often it comes to paſs, that tender Conſciences, for want of due light; tender and ſcrupulous Conſciences, they are wonderful apt for to make thoſe things to be ſins, which God and his Law never makes. And ſo ſometimes with hypocrites, as in our Saviours time; O, what a matter was it among the Phariſes, to eat with unwaſhen hands, which was no ſin? and to drink in unwaſhen cups;

cups; and this and that? Thus it is ſometimes with hypocrites: and I might inſtance in ſundry particulars. — And ſo in the caſe of ſcrupulous Conſciences; how many are there that are apt to reckon thoſe things to be ſins, and ſtartle at, which indeed are no ſins? As now, many, through tenderneſs of Conſcience, are fearful to take that liberty in meats and drinks, which Chriſt hath purchaſed for them. How many, out of a tenderneſs, and ſcrupulouſneſs of Conſcience, though neceſſity have required it, have been afraid to take any bodily refreſhing, in the day wherein they were to partake of the ſupper of the Lord, before they have eaten at that table, afraid, leſt they ſhould ſin againſt God, in taking ſomething for neceſſary refreſhing of the body: a ſin in their account, which is no ſin in itſelf at all? So I might inſtance in ſundry particulars.— So, on the contrary; How many are there, that reckon thoſe to be duties, which are very dreadful provocations of the Great Majeſty of Heaven: Mark what our Saviour ſpeaks, in *Joh.* 16. the begin. *They ſhall caſt you out of the Synagogues*; they ſhall excommunicate you: *I, the time will come, when they that kill you, will think they do God ſervice*; ſo far from looking upon it as a ſin, to revile, reproach, excommunicate, impriſon, and kill the Servants of Chriſt, and thoſe that bear, and hold forth his name; ſo far from reckoning theſe things to be ſin, that they look upon them as *good ſervice* to God. *Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a Devil?* Why, they were ſo far from reckoning it to be a *ſin*, that they look upon it as a *duty*. Now, whence is this, but through ignorance: Sometimes indeed it is through wilful igno-

ignorance, but moſtly through groſs ignorance: and our Saviour gives this reaſon; *Theſe things ſhall they do, becauſe they know neither the Father nor me*; they know us not, they do not know who are the people of God; they will reckon you to be the baſe ſpawn of Hell, the childern of the Devil; though themſelves are ſo, yet they will reckon you to be ſo: they reckon upon you to be the ſcumm, and off-ſcowring of the World. Now, becauſe they know not me, nor my Father, therefore they will do theſe things; and they reckon upon it, that they do God very good ſervice. And this was the caſe of *Paul*; *I verily thought*, ſaith he, *That I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jeſus*; ſaith he, I thought it was my duty to cry down the Name of Chriſt, and to cry down the Doctrine of Chriſt, and to cry down the Profeſſors of the Goſpel of Chriſt: I verily thought with my ſelf, that I ought to do theſe things: I did not look upon theſe things to be ſin; ſaith he, *I was a Perſecuter, and a Blaſphemer, and Injurious*; I, but I did not know that it was perſecution, and blaſphemy, and injury; I did theſe things *ignorantly*, ſaith he, it was for want of *Knowledge*, becauſe I was not laid in with Knowledge as I ſhould have been, that I did theſe things: So that we had need then, to grow in Knowledge; for the more we grow in Knowledge, the more able ſhall we be to make a judgement of ſin.

And ſo on the contrary, a judgment of Graces: The more we grow in Knowledge, the better ſhall we be to make a judgment of Graces. Alas, how many are there, that through want of Knowledge, not being duly informed and improved in their know-

knowledge, they do run upon moſt groſs and dangerous miſtakes; take that to be ſaving Grace, which indeed is nothing ſo; and that to be Holineſs, which is nothing elſe but a very ſhew and reſemblance of Holineſs; that to be love of God and of Chriſt, and faith in God, which is nothing ſo. O, the dangerous miſtakes which poor ſouls do run upon; they do verily think that they do Believe, and that they have Repented, and that they truſt in God, and bear a love to Chriſt, and that they bear a love to Godlineſs; they are ſtrong in that perſwaſion, and yet they run upon dangerous miſtakes, and all becauſe there is a deficiency in their Knowledge: They are not ſo duly improved in knowledge, as that they be able to make a judgment of Sin and of Grace.

And ſo for Duties. We had need to indeavour a growth in Knowledge, that ſo we may be the better able to judge of Duties, when they are Duties, performed according to God. Alas, how many think they perform Duties in moſt acceptable manner to God, when they do no other than offer the Sacrifice of fools: They think they pray, and pray pleaſing; and hear, and hear in a right manner; come to the Table of the Lord, and think they do excellent good ſervice to Jeſus Chriſt, and that which he will accept of, when in the mean while they do profane his Name, and offer indignity to him; they wound him again, they Crucifie him, they become guilty of his very Body and Blood, and yet all the while they think that they quit themſelves in a very fair, commendable and comely manner, and all becauſe of a want of Knowledge; they do not underſtand the myſtery of the Goſpel, and of Godlineſs, and of Goſpel-worſhip; they do not underſtand the way of the Lord, therefore in that regard there

is great reason that Christians should indeavour a growth in Knowledge.

4. I add yet further: Well it may be required of Believers that they grow in Knowledge, because by their growth in Knowledge they shall be the better able to manage their affections and passions. Alas, Brethren, we may know, and it may be do in sad experience, what unruly things affections and passions are, and how apt, like untamed Horses, to ride over Hedge and Ditch, and to be kept within no due bounds—and why this—For want of Knowledge, because there is not the bridle of Knowledge and Understanding to rein the affections and passions. As now to instance: Alas, how many are there that are inordinate in their *Love*? In their love to Creatures, to Children, Husbands, Wives, and all for Want of Knowledge, because they do not know the true state of these things, and how their love ought to be managed—And so for *Fear*: O, how apt is our Fear to go beyond its bounds—And our *Desires*; how apt are we, how irregular and inordinate in them—And so in our *Zeal*; Zeal like fire, that is very useful while it's kept in its place; but when it comes to break up to the top of the House, that threatens firing of all. Now all this is for want of the due knowledge of God and Christ, and of the state of things about which our affections are exercised and imployed; and therefore you shall find this, That God doth require in his Word, that our affections should be managed with knowledge, and judgement.—I tell you Brethren, the best love, is a judicious love; a love with knowledge: and therefore you shall find, in 1 *Phil.* the Apostle praies, and requires, that their love might abound *in all knowledge, and in all judgement.*

Why,

Why, it is nothing for a man to have an ignorant blind love, an injudicious love; God doth not value such a love: It is the knowing Love, the well created Love, the Love that a man can give a reason of, the judicious Love; that is the Love which God values: *That your Love may abound in all Knowledge.*

And so likewise *Zeal*; the Apostle speaks concerning his Brethren, *They have a Zeal of God*: O, they are mighty hot and zealous! But, saith he, *Their Zeal is not according to Knowledge*—And so for *Desire*. Truly, by having a well-improved Knowledge, a Knowledge that is well grown, we shall be the better able to manage these affections of *Love*, *Zeal*, *Delight*, *Desire*, *Fear* and *Joy*; all the Affections, they will be the better ordered, in case that our Knowledge be well improved: And that's another Reason.

5. Again, Well may it be required of Christians that they grow in Knowledge, because by their growing in Knowledge they shall be the better able for to order their Words, Speeches and Discourses. O, what irregularities are there in the Tongue! *The Tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poyson.* I, but from hence it comes very much; it's for want of a well digested knowledge, apt we are to sin and offend in wanton speeches, lustful, lascivious speeches, and by language of swearing (and the like.) O, the manifold evils that break out from the Tongue! And truly much what upon that account, because there is not knowledge to regulate the Tongue, so as that we may come to understand what is fit Language for us to speak.

6. Well may it be required, that we indeavour to growth in Knowledge; for the more Christians

grow in knowledge, the more fit will they be for to judge of Gods providential Diſpenſations. Alas, how often do we miſinterpret God and his dealings, and paſs very hard and ſharp cenſures upon them? we are apt to do ſo, and to deal very diſhonourably with God concerning his dealings and Diſpenſations—And why—It is for want of Knowledge; *It is a people that do err in their heart*; they were ever and anon quarrelling with God, according to that paſſage that you have in *Pſal.* 45. *Forty years long was I grieved with this Generation; they tempted me, proved me, and ſaw my works*; and they were cenſuring me for this and that, becauſe I brought them out of *Egypt*, and carried them into the Wilderneſs. And ſaith he, *It is a people that do err in their heart*: And the reaſon is this; *They have not known my wayes.* It is through ignorance, and for want of a due Information concerning me, that they run upon theſe dangerous wayes. And this was *Job*'s caſe, though other wayes a knowing man, yet not altogether ſo compleated in his Knowledge as he ſhould have been: But the Lord comes upon him, and expoſtulates the caſe with him; *Who is that that darkneth counſel by words without knowledge?* Words, I words, hard words, cenſorious paſſages drop from his mouth; I, but they are *words without knowledge.* That's another thing; we ſhall be better able to judge of Providences, though they be very myſterious, when we come to be well improved in our Knowledge concerning God, whoſe wayes are in the Sea, and whoſe paths are in the great deeps; and by knowing aright concerning God, we ſhall be the better able to make a judgment of his Diſpenſations.

7. Well may it be required of Chriſtians and Believers,

lievers, that they grow in Knowledge, becauſe that by growing in knowledge they ſhall be the better able for to manage all thoſe Places, and Conditions, and Relations which they are planted under—As now; Thoſe that are Fathers, Mothers, Maſters, Servants, Husbands, Wives, there is very much lyes upon them to do, each in their place, ſtation and relation, that they may beautifie them, and have the bleſſing of God upon them in thoſe Relations under which they are planted. There is very much lyes upon us, and I beſeech you conſider well of it: I ſay, that much of the power of Godlineſs, it lyes in the well managing of our particular Places and Relations; when men are godly, as Husbands, as Wives, as Maſters, as Servants, as Parents, as Children; much of Godlineſs doth lye in the well managing of theſe Relations: And when we are conſcientiouſly careful to fill up theſe Relations, truly we then beautifie them, and we adorn our holy Profeſſion—I, but how ſhall this come to paſs, unleſs that we be a People of a well improved Knowledge? Alas, if we do not know our Duties in our Places, what belongs to me as a Husband, as a Wife, as a Father, as a Child, as a Maſter; if I have not a well improved Knowledge concerning my Duty in my Relation, I ſhall never be able to perform it. Truly thus it is, and therefore you ſhall find that the Apoſtle in 1 *Pet.* 3. he requires this on the Husbands part, That *he ſhould dwell with the Wife as a man of Knowledge*, that he may know how to go in and out before his Yoke-fellow, and before his Family. And ſo a *Wife*, a Woman of Knowledge, that ſhe may carry her ſelf towards her Husband in a becoming manner, and towards her Family - A *Maſter*, a man of Knowledge, that he may underſtand what is his

Duty as a Maſter, and carry it accordingly—A *Servant*, a man of Knowledge, a woman of Knowledge—And ſo a *Father*, a *Child*; they ſhould labour after the Knowledge of their Duties in their Places and Relations, that accordingly they may carry themſelves: So that now, lay all theſe ſeveral Particulars that I have propounded to you together, and truly you cannot but ſtand convinc'd ſurely of this, That it is God's will, and it is Saints Duty, and well may it be required of them as their Duty, that they endeavour to indear Knowledge, and endeavour a growth in their Knowledge: I Brethren, that is it which firſtly I have been ſent to communicate unto you, That your Duty is to grow in Knowledge upon all theſe accounts; — upon the account that you know but in part, and it's but a little part: — And then, the more you grow in Knowledge, the more you have of the Image of God. — The more you grow in Knowledge, the more will you have of that rich Treaſure that's laid up in Jeſus Chriſt. — And then, the more you grow in Knowledge, the more fit will you be to make a Judgment of ſins; what are ſins, and what are not ſins: — The more able will you be to make a Judgment of Graces; what are ſuch, and what are not: — The more able will you be to judge of Duties; what are Duties, and when duly managed: — The more able will you be to manage your paſſions and affections, which for want of Knowledge are many times inordinate and exorbitant: — The more able will you be to rule your tongues and ſpeeches: — The more able will you be to make a Judgment of the Providences of God, and to carry it becomingly under them: — The more able will you be to manage thoſe Places and Relations under which you

are

are planted. Now, do but weigh theſe things well, and you will ſee reaſon to ſeek out for Knowledge; that if you know, yet you had need to follow on to know more and more: But that's not all.

I propound 2ly. That as it is a Duty incumbent upon a Chriſtian to endeavour a growth in Knowledge; ſo eſpecially in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Oh, this is the growth, this is the Knowledge which is eſpecially to be endeared; and a growth wherein is in ſpecial manner to be endeavoured! Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, however it be in reſpect of other knowledge; yet that Knowledge you had need look to, that you may be Profidents in.

Why, Firſt of all (that I may convince you now of this;) If it be the good will of God, that you may come under the power of an effectual convincement as to this, That this Knowledge you are to endeavour a growth in, I may very fitly make uſe of that which I gave in the former Doctrine.—I told you, that we know but in part: O Brethren, we know Chriſt but in part; as we know little of God, as touching his infinite glorious Eſſence and Being. O, we know but little of Chriſt; O, 'tis a Myſterie. The Knowledge of Chriſt is a Myſterie; Oh, 'tis a hidden Myſterie, it was kept hid from Ages and Generations: Oh, it's a Myſtery which God was pleaſed to keep ſecret in his own boſom for many thouſands of years; ſome little whiſpering there was of it upon the fall of Man, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall break the ſerpents head*: And what a pittance was here? Though infinite mercy appeared in making this little appearance, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall break the ſerpents head*: Then afterward; a little more of this; but a Myſterie, and ſtill a My-

ſterie, and an unſearchable Myſterie; a Myſterie which they that are moſt inſighted in, will have cauſe to ſay, Alas, how little a thing is known of him? and what a depth is here? and how ſcant and ſhort is our line, that we are not able to fathom the depth? O, it is ſuch a Knowledge, the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as that all thoſe Dimenſions are moſt properly reckoned to it; heights, and depths, and breadths, and lengths; and yet it is a Knowledge that paſſeth knowledge: Such is the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. We had need then to be endeavouring a growth in it, and to reſolve thus; I have not attained, nor know nothing as I ought to know: I am not yet ſufficiently skill'd in this Myſterie; If *Paul* that was ſuch a knowing man were alive at this day, he would be ſtill purſuing after this Knowledge, the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

But, but what account is to be given of this Knowledge, that we ſhould be ſo ſet to endeavour a growth in it? Conſider (beſides) that that I have now ſpoken as touching the ſmallneſs of that meaſure attained. Conſider yet further:

First of all, There is great reaſon that Chriſtians and Believers ſhould endeavour a growth in this Knowledge: First, It is the moſt excellent Knowledge that ever was diſcovered to the World; and you have the Apoſtles word for it, who was able to make a Judgment of Knowledge and Knowledge, *Phil.* 3. 8. O, ſaith he, I do here give my Judgment; and, ſaith he, This is my ſtanding Judgment: I am an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*, of the ſeed of *Abraham*; I am an *Iſraelite*, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*; as touching the Law, a *Phariſee*: — And he was a man that could ſpeak with Tongues more than all the Apoſtles;

ſtles: — And he was a man of profound Knowledge; *Though I be rude in ſpeech, yet not in knowledge.* Why, he had a vaſt portion of Knowledge; yet when he comes to compare one thing with another, For my part, ſaith he, *I account all things but loſs and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord.* All but *loſs* and *dung*, ſuch an excellency there is in the knowledge of Chriſt; and truly, all other knowledge may well be lookt upon as inconſiderable knowledge, and all other Injoyments in the World, but even accounted as loſs and dung, compared with the Knowledge of Chriſt.

Conſider the Subject of this Knowledge, Chriſt himſelf.

Conſider him in his Perſon; The brightneſs of his Father's Glory, the expreſs Image of his Perſon; one that was in the Form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God.

Conſider him, yet, notwithſtanding this account of him, as one that hath a tranſcendent love to his Father, love to the World, that he was moſt willing to comply with his Fathers pleaſure, in taking upon him the nature of Man: The Lord, to become a *Servant*; the *Prince of Life*, to become ſubject to *Death*. O, the bleſſed and only Potentate, to be made a Curſe; — he that knew no ſin, becomes willing to be made ſin; — he that was the Lord of all, to become a Servant of all. What ſhall I ſay? The conſideration of the ſubject of this Knowledge, it commends it to us as the moſt excellent Knowledge that ever was communicated to the World.

And then conſider but this Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as in his Perſon, ſo in his Qualifications; in his Love, in his Meekneſs, in his Patience, in his Humility, in his Gentleneſs, in his Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, in every reſpect. Con-

Consider him in his Office; such a Priest, such a Prophet, such a King, as the World never had the like.

Consider him in his Actions and Performances; consider him in his miraculous Actions, in his moral Actions; consider him in his military Actions and Performances, such a Saviour, of such wonderful power: And of such Atchievements and Accomplishments, as the like was never heard of in the World; that he should rout Hell it self, all the Devils in Hell: It was a great matter in *David* to come into the Camp, and to get the Victory over a Gyant, a *Goliah*, that was yet but a man: But for this Captain, this noble Souldier, to come into the Camp, and to ingage against all the powers of Hell and Darkness, all the Devils in Hell, that were all of them in Arms against him, and yet he routs them, and makes a spoyl of them, and leads them, a company of base slaves, after him; he makes a shew of them openly, and triumphed over them in his Cross, he gets a Conquest. This is the most noble Captain, and the most worthy Souldier that ever the World had. Consider him (I say) in those military Performances, — moral Performances, — miraculous Performances; the wonderful cures that he wrought, such a Physitian that the World never had the like; could Cure with a look, with a word, with a touch; he could cure Bodies, Souls. There's never a Physitian in the World could purge a sin out of a mans Conscience; I, but Christ can purge the Soul from sin. Now Brethren, I can at present but name these things; and then to come to tell you what an excellent Knowledge the Knowledge of Jesus Christ is.

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As in respect of the subject of it, so in respect of the benefit and usefulness of it; never any knowledge in the World will profit like unto this knowledge. Here I have many things to say; but I only at present give you but a little touch of them: —— The Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, O, it is the most profitable, and useful, and beneficial Knowledge. Mark, *by the Law, comes the knowledge of sin*: So the Apostle, in *Rom.* 7. I had not known sin, except the Law had said thus and thus: I, but when a man comes to know his plague, and disease, what is he the neerer, if he doth not know his remedy? If you should now be tryed, as indeed it is necessary you should, if you have not been brought to it. If you should be brought to know what vitious natures you have, what cursed corruptions, made to see what deep and dreadful guilt you have contracted upon you; if you should come to have the discovery made, as those that God hath a favour to: they have such discoveries made to them, the spirit of God comes as a convincing spirit: if you should come to have the knowledge of your sins; O, now I am made to see, and know, that I am a vile, damned wretch! I come to know my sin, and I know no more; I see I am a most plaguie creature. Now, if you should know no more, this is the way to become stark mad, and to fall under most dreadful despair, as *Judas* did; and you know what course he took. But now, the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is the knnowledg that relieves us concerning the knowledg of sin: O, I know my plague; I, but by my knowledge of Christ, I come to know my plaister: I know my disease, but by the knowledge of Christ, I come to know my remedy.

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The knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I will tell you what a knowledge it is: It is a heart-breaking knowledge; — a soul-humbling knowledge; — it is a sin-killing knowledge; — it is a Grace-quickening knowledge; — O, it is a love-inflaming knowledge; — and it is such a knowledge, as will draw out the heart to Christ; — such a knowledge, as will make men willing to do any thing, to suffer any thing for the name and sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. O, 'tis excellent knowledge, precious knowledge, useful knowledge, the most beneficial knowledge. The Apostle professeth, (as I said before,) that he accounted all things but loss and dung, for the excellency of this knowledge.

The inlargement of these things I cannot give you; nor come to Application; but only thus; — Will you but set your hearts to a due consideration of the things that have been spoken? Certainly, if you have but an ear to hear, and a heart to understand, and consider of these things; how rationally you are required to grow in knowledge, and especially in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: if you do but weigh these things, and the account given, why we should endeavour such a growth; you will be able to conclude what is for you to do: — not to slight this knowledge, but to endeavour after it; and that you may know Christ, know him in his Name, and Nature, and Offices; — and know him, not only (for that's the thing that I would close up withal) with an historical and notional knowledge. Peradventure you may say as the Apostle speaks: We have all knowledge; I, it may be so; a great deal of knowledge there may be in the head, and yet

nothing

nothing of true saving knowledge in the heart: but it is not a notional knowledge, but a heart-knowledge, an in-working knowledge; such a knowledge as is opperative to such purposes as I have hinted to you. This is the knowledge that we should pursue, and endeavour a growth in.

SERM.

SERM. X.

I Would add to that which hath been ſpoken of; this to be further conſidered.

The knowledge of Chriſt, it is a moſt excellent knowledge; it is ſuch a knowledge, as the Angels, the Glorious Angels, are exceedingly devoted to the inquiring into; they are very much ſet to this, that they may come to underſtand this knowledge concerning Chriſt. The Apoſtle *Peter*, in his 1 Epiſt. Ch. 1. gives you this account concerning them; ſpeaking there of the *Revel.* ver. 11, 12. The ſpirit did teſtifie before-hand, the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the Glory which ſhould follow, unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us, they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the Goſpel unto you, ~~which~~ with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from Heaven; *Which things* (mark you,) *the Angels deſire to look into.* Do but conſider that, which things of the Goſpel concerning Chriſt, his ſufferings, and Glory; the Angels deſire to look into; they are very cloſe Students in this knowledge, and moſt ſtrongly ſet to be acquainted with theſe myſteries; the myſterie of the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: A knowledge therefore, that our hearts ſhould be very ſtrongly ſet to increaſe in, and for to get more acquaintance with.

And this I vvould further ſay; that for ne Apoſtle *Paul*, vvho vvas a man of excellent parts, and of very great knovvledge; a man of much learn-

learning; and vvas as able to make a judgement of knovvledge, as any man, and for to discern betvveen knovvledge and knovvledge. The Apostle *Paul*, he vvas (as I hinted before) very high in his esteem of this knovvledge; and if so be that it had been convenient for him to have boasted, truly, he vvould have made his boast of his knovvledge in the mysterie of Christ: Though I (saith he) be rude in speech, yet not in knovvledge; and (saith he) I vvould have you to knovv my knovvledge in the mysterie of Christ. So in *Eph.* 3. vvriting that Epistle to them, he expresseth himself to this purpose; *Whereby, when you come to read, you may understand my knowledge in the mysterie of Christ.*

Further, it is a knovvledge that vve should endeavour to grovv up in; it is the most beneficial and profitable knovvledge: it is the most beneficial knovvledge in all the World; — It is a heart-humbling knovvledge; — It is a sin-killing knovvledge; —— It is a conscience-quieting knovvledge.

And here I might add sundry other particulars, that you might come to knovv hovv to value the knovvledge of Christ: and so, hovv much it concerns us to endeavour after a grovvth and increase in it.

It is a svveetning knovvledge; it svveetens a mans spirit under all the bitterness that it may meet vvithal: — It svveetens afflictions; — it svveetens temptations, and vvhatsoever may be to the imbittering of a mans spirit. O, the knovvledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! it vvill bring the soul into a condition to relish svveetness in it!

And

And then, it is a ſanctifying knowledge; it's a knowledge that ſanctifies the underſtanding. There is another knowledge which men are apt to be lifted up through the attainment of, and lifted up with; which is a knowledge, that doth rather tend to the corrupting, and depraving of the underſtanding: but the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, it doth ſanctifie the underſtanding, — and perfects the underſtanding: — it ſanctifies all other knowledge that we may come to attain unto. And much might be ſpoken to that purpoſe.

But I add yet further, that we may ſtand the more fully convinced of our duty this way, to endeavour a growth in the knowledge of Chriſt; Conſider thus; Beleevers, they are moſt ſtrongly bound to place their whole truſt and confidence in Chriſt; and that in order to their being everlaſtingly ſaved: *Bleſſed are all they that truſt in Chriſt.* It is He (I ſay) upon whom a Beleevers truſt and confidence is to be placed in the fulleſt ſtrength of it; and other confidences than what are plac'd in any but in Chriſt, God will curſe them, and confound them: *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm*: but, bleſſed is the man whoſe truſt is in Chriſt. It is Chriſt whom we are to truſt with our lives, — with our ſouls, — with our conſciences, — with our peace, — with our comforts, — with our eternal concernments: Thus it is, — it is Chriſt that we are to truſt upon for Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification, and everlaſting life.

It is Chriſt upon whom we are to place our hope and confidence towards God.

It is Chriſt who is the foundation, upon whom we are to lay the whole weight of our ſouls for eter-

eternity. Now then conſider, how ſtrongly the Argument will grow up from hence: if ſo be that Believers be ſo much bound, to place their truſt in Chriſt; to pitch, and fix their confidence upon Chriſt; they had need know him well: this will follow upon it. I tell you Brethren, you had need to know (reaſon will ſuggeſt this to you) that man well, whom you truſt your lives withal; all your eſtates, and worldly intereſts withal; leſt, putting your confidence in an unfaithful man, or one that will not be reſponſible to you concerning the truſt you place in him, you be utterly undone, and fall under ſad and ſhameful diſappointments. Will you truſt your ſelves, in caſe of ſickneſs, with one that you never knew, or have but little knowledge of; do not know whether he have proportionable wiſdom, and underſtanding, and skill to manage ſuch an undertaking as your health, and recovery from ſome deadly diſeaſe amounts unto? Nay, you will ſay, I will know him well, before I will truſt him with ſuch a concernment.—— If ſo be that you have a Suit in Law, which your whole Eſtate depends upon the well iſſuing of; you will endeavour this; to know him well whom you truſt your Cauſe with, leſt it ſhould miſcarry, by means of his ill management of it: this we all will yield unto, as a rational thing. Why now, I pray conſider; you are bound to truſt Chriſt with your lives, with your ſouls; they are wofully diſeaſed, and He muſt be your Phyſitian; and you are bound to make your application unto him for health and cure. Truly, you had need to know him; it's your duty to be well acquainted with him, that ſo you may come with the more boldneſs, to place your truſt and confidence in Him,

and to ſay; Well, I dare venture my life in his hand; I know him well; I know his wiſdom; I know his skill; I am ſo well acquainted with his ſufficiency, that, if I had a thouſand lives, I would put them all into his hand.—— You are to truſt him for your eternal inheritance, and for to plead your Cauſe; to anſwer all the Suits that are to be commenc'd againſt you by the Devil, by your Conſciences; it is He that muſt plead your Cauſe; you are bound to this, to truſt Him with your Cauſe. Now, it ſtands you upon much therefore, to know him well, and be well improved in your knowledge of Chriſt: foraſmuch as you are to commit the cauſe of your ſouls to Him.

Conſider further; You are bound to place your moſt intire and intenſive love upon Chriſt: this is the bond the Lord ſets upon every beleeving ſoul; to love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, and to love him with the moſt intire and intenſive love. Conſider this; you are bound to love him above your *lives*, above your *ſouls*; you are bound to love him more than you love your *Father*, your *Mother*, your *Wife*, your *Children*, your *Eſtates*, every thing in the World that is moſt neer and dear unto you: this obligation and bond, the Goſpel puts Beleevers under; — they are bound (I ſay) to love the Lord Jeſus, with a ſupream love, and to give this account of themſelves; ſuch as the Prophet doth of himſelf, in *Pſ.* 33. O Lord, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and whom is there on earth, that I love, and deſire in compariſon of thee?* This is your duty, the duty of a Beleever, for to have the ſtrength of his love let out upon Chriſt. —— It's our duty to love him with a

Conjugal

Conjugal love; love him ſo, as to own him for our Beloved, and to refuſe all other beloveds in compariſon of him: this is our duty. Now, mark you; Will not then the Argument flow ſtrongly from hence, we have reaſon then to know him well, and labour to improve in the knowledge of him: Chriſt doth not care for a blind love, He doth not make much account of the love that is ſet upon him by thoſe that know him not: it is a judicious love that Chriſt makes account of. Now therefore, it concerns you to endeavour a growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; that knowing him well, our hearts may break out, and burn in love to him; and that ſo he may come to have the ſtrength of our affections let out upon him. There's never a wiſe woman in the World, that will let out her love upon a man that ſhe knows not, or hath little knowledge of; I will know him well, whether he be a proper object for me to place my love upon. Now, thus the caſe ſtands between Chriſt and a beleeving ſoul; and therefore we had need endeavour an improvement in the knowledge of Chriſt, that ſo we may come to have our hearts the more free to let out our love upon him; and ſay, O, I know him, I know him ſo well, that no beloved for my purpoſe, beſides himſelf: *Chooſe* him, I will chooſe him above all the World. This was the courſe that the Daughters of *Jeruſalem* took, in *Cant.* 2. When the Spouſe was giving in charge to them concerning her Beloved, ſay they, *What is thy beloved more than another beloved?* Why, ſaith ſhe, *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand*: ſhe ſpeaks as one that had a full knowledge of him, and upon

that account her heart was ſo ſtrongly drawn out to him: thus it was with her. Now, in Chap. 6. having obtained the knowledge of her Beloved, that he was ſo choice and precious a one; their hearts begin to flame out, and to be in love with him: *O, whither is thy Beloved gone; O thou faireſt among women; whither is thy beloved gone, that we may ſeek him with thee?* for, as he is thy Beloved; ſo ſhall he be our Beloved: now we come to know more of him, now are our hearts inflamed with the love of him, and our deſires carried out more ſtrongly after him.

Again, we had need endeavour a growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Whereas they are bound to truſt in him, and to ſet their love upon him, ſo they are under this obligation, for to captivate their judgements to him, ſo as to yield up themſelves in all obedience and duty to be at his beck and bidding, and to comport with him in all his requiries, and to do whatſoever he commands them, without diſputing his commands: this is a Beleevers duty: Whatſoever he requires of them, without any more ado, to follow him reſolvedly in every way that he leads them into: If any man will be my Diſciple, let him deny himſelf, and follow me, and hearken to my commands; ſuch ſervice and duty every beleeving ſoul ſtands bound to the performance of. Now conſider, if ſo be that one will go, and bind himſelf to ſuch a Maſter, whoſe will he muſt follow, whoſe commands he muſt obey, and with whoſe requiries he muſt comport: truly, he had need to know him well, that he is ſuch a one, as will require nothing but that which is juſt and righteous, and that which is fit for him

him to comply withal. Now, the caſe ſtands thus between Chriſt and a Beleever: therefore he had need endeavour to be well-knowing of Chriſt, what a one he is, that he is moſt righteous and juſt in all his requiries, and that he will put us upon no ſervice but what is for his honour, and for our benefit; that ſo knowing what a one he is, we may be the more free to yield up our ſelves unto, and without any further diſpute, to apply to his counſels and commands.

And then I add this further; it is a duty that lies upon Beleevers; as to place their truſt in Chriſt, and to ſet their love upon Chriſt, and to yield up themſelves in duty and obedience to Chriſt; ſo likewiſe, to incourage themſelves to ſuffering for Chriſt, let the ſuffering be what it will; to ſuffer loſs, ſuffer ſhame, ſuffer pain, any thing that Chriſt doth call them out to the ſuffering of; they are bound for to comport with him in, and to yield up themſelves unto; the bearing of whatſoever burden he laies upon them: *If any man will be my Diſciple, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs*: let the Croſs be what it will, if it be the Croſs of Chriſt, truly, it muſt be taken up; this is incumbent upon every Beleever, as his duty; ſtartle at nothing of difficulty, danger, and ſufferings, that we may be put upon for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt.

Willing to ſuffer the ſpoyling of Goods, the loſs of our Eſtates, to ſuffer ſhame for his Name, to ſuffer death, if he call us to it. Now, conſider then, how ſtrongly the Argument will riſe from hence: truly, it's to good purpoſe, that we ſhould endeavour to grow in the knowledge of Chriſt. Truly, I had need look well to it, whom I ſuffer for; if ſo be that I know, that if I will ingage in ſuch a

Relation, either as a Wife, or as a Servant, I ſhall be ſure to undergo a great deal of ſuffering upon the account of the Relation under which I paſs: truly, I had need well to know the perſons, on whoſe ſake, and behalf, and account, I am like to ſuffer ſo much; whether I ſhall not have cauſe to be aſhamed of my ſuffering. Now, in this regard, it concerns the Saints and people of God, to endeavour after a well-improved knowledge of Chriſt; that ſo, when they come to ſuffer for his Name, and Truth, and Goſpel, and waies, they may bear up with confidence and boldneſs, and not be aſhamed; and ſay, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (and it's an excellent paſſage to this purpoſe) 2 *Tim.* 1. *I ſuffer theſe things*, (ſaith he) *but I am not aſhamed:* I ſuffer as an evil doer, unto bonds, and I undergo theſe and theſe reproaches and ſcorns, for the ſake of Chriſt: I ſuffer theſe things, but I am not aſhamed; O, I know in whom I have believed, I know who it is for whom I ſuffer; I ſuffer on the behalf, and for the ſake of ſuch a one, as will make up all to me; I ſhall never have cauſe to be aſhamed of the ſhame, and of the pain, and of the reproaches and ſcorns that I undergo for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt. No, this was that that made the Apoſtles, in *Acts* 5. to go away from the Councel rejoycing, that they were accounted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And truly Brethren, in theſe regards now, there is very great reaſon that Beleevers ſhould ſtudy the knowledge of Chriſt, and labour to be well improved in it; — and that, in regard of their truſt, --- and of their love, --- and of their duty, --- and of their ſuffering, which they are to reſolve upon for the ſake of Jeſus

Chriſt.

Christ. Alas, it is the madness of the World, that they will put their trust, and place their confidence in those things which they have no knowledge of: they have no knowledge of them, that they will be responsible to them, nor answer their expectation; and so it is the dishonour of men; as it was in the case of the Israelites; they would put their trust and confidence in *Egypt*, a broken reed; they knew not *Egypt*, they knew not what disappointments were in *Egypt*. It is the dishonour of men, that they will pass their love, and place their affections upon those things they know not, do service to those things they know not, be willing to suffer for those they know not: Did men know what vain things, riches, pleasures, worldly interests were, and what little account there is to be made of them; did they but know them within and without, through and through; they would never carry it towards them as they do; never place their trust, and set their hearts so much upon them. And it is that that will be the shame and confusion of worldly minded persons (the Lord give us wisdom to consider of it in time) at last; when they shall come to see what the object is, that they have plac'd their trust, and set their hearts upon. O beast! O mad wretch that I was, that I should go and put my trust in a thing that cannot profit me, that can stand me in no stead! I trusted in my uncertain riches; uncertain they were, and altogether irresponsible to the confidence that I placed in them: I set my love upon this and that; this base and beggerly lust: O, it's base things, and worthy to be hated: I spent my time, and laid out my strength for such and such things; I thought they would be very con-

tentful in the enjoyment: But, alas! I find I have laid out my money for that I ſee is no bread, and for that will yield me no profit at all. This will be the confutation of the World.

Yet further, That we may ſtand the more fully convinc'd of this as our Duty, to endeavour a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: The very Knowledge it ſelf, or the ſubject matter of this Knowledge doth exceeding ſtrongly and loudly beſpeak a Believers endeavour this way. The ſubject matter of this Knowledge I told you before, That Chriſt is the ſubject matter; and that ſpeaks the excellency of the Knowledge. — But now, beſides, The ſubject matter of this Knowledge duly weighed and conſidered, it doth beſpeak a Believers endeavours after the Improvement of this Knowledge. For conſider, — The Knowledge of Chriſt, it is Knowledge in a Myſterie; and the Myſterie concerning Chriſt, it is ſuch a Myſterie, as hath heights, and depths, and breadths, and lengths; it hath all dimenſions: I, and beyond comprehenſion. That Scripture, which in the carrying on of this Diſcourſe, I may have occaſion to give you a more full account of than now I can; but I hint at it now upon the account that I am ſpeaking: In *Eph* 3. The Apoſtle prays, *That they might comprehend with all the Saints, what is the height, and depth, and breadth, and length*: And, ſaith he, *That you may know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge.* There is, ſaith he, in the Knowledge of Chriſt, heights, and depths, and breadths, and lengths, and particularly in the knowledge of his *Love*; and it is ſuch a Love as paſſeth Knowledge. Now, do but argue thus: Is there ſuch a Myſterie? Are there ſuch depths in this Knowledge? Then certainly we had

had need to ſet to it, that we do endeavour for to grow up in this Knowledge, that we may be as comprehenſive of it as poſſible we can; this is our Duty: As now to inſtance in ſome Particulars.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning this Myſterie, in *Col.* 1. ſpeaking there of the Myſterie; *Which* (ſaith he) *is Chriſt in you, the hope of Glory.* O, Brethren, do you know the meaning of this? It may be you think you do; but I ſay (I am ſufficiently warranted to ſay) If any man think he knoweth any thing, he knows nothing as he ought. Do you know the interpretation of this, *Chriſt in you, the hope of Glory*? This is the Myſterie; the Apoſtle calls it ſo: You may be apt to think you can reach the bottom of this; *Chriſt*, and *Chriſt in you*; and Chriſt in you, *the hope of Glory.* Alas, we are apt to put our ſelves off with a little ſip of the Cup; we go as it were with the top of the lip, and give a touch upon that which would cover head and ſhoulders and all; we might ſtand under theſe waters they are ſo deep: Such a word as this, it beſpeaks our ſearch, and diſquiſition, and inquiry, and to ſet in with God. O, but Lord, What's the meaning of this, *Chriſt in you*; and Chriſt in you *the hope of Glory?* This beſpeaks our endeavour after the Knowledge of Chriſt.

Here I might fall upon ſundry other Particulars, as this belongs to the Knowledge of Chriſt, according to the Apoſtles account, in *Eph.* 3. he ſpeaks there of the Myſterie which was kept ſecret from Ages and Generations: And, ſaith he, Was not ſo made known as it is now to his holy Apoſtles and Prophets by the Spirit. — What's this Myſterie? That the *Gentiles* ſhould be fellow-Heirs of the ſame Body, partakers of his Promiſe in Chriſt by the Goſpel:

Goſpel: That is a Myſterie; and this beſpeaks our endeavour after a growth in knowledge, even the Knowledge of Chriſt; for this belongs to the Knowledge of Chriſt. Chriſt will be conſidered as myſtical Chriſt; he will be made up of *Jew* and *Gentile*, the middle Wall being broken down; a Myſterie hidden from Ages and Generations; but it's made known: I, but how little a thing is known, even of this?

And then I add withal, The Myſterie; it was the myſterie concerning the *Gentiles*, that they ſhould come in to be fellow-Heirs.

It's *the Myſterie*, with reſpect to the *Jews*: So the Apoſtle calls it, in *Rom.* 11. This Myſterie I would not have you ignorant of, leſt you ſhould be wiſe in your own conceits, that blindneſs in part is happened to the *Jews*, until the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* come in, and then all *Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved: Here's a Myſterie. Now, theſe Myſteries beſpeak our ſerious endeavour, that we may come to grow in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

And then the Myſterie concerning the Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus; — the Adminiſtration of it; — the delivery of it, upon the Adminiſtration of it, to the Father. The Apoſtle holds forth theſe Myſteries:

The Myſterie of the Kingdom; the new Heavens, and the new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs, which belongs to the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

And then the delivering up of the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be All in all, when Chriſt hath performed the Adminiſtration of the Kingdom. Now, I ſay, theſe are Myſteries belonging to the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus

ſus Chriſt, which do all of them loudly beſpeak our moſt ſedulous endeavours after a growth in this bleſſed Knowledge.

And to add no more, conſider that paſſage of the Apoſtle, in 1 *Tim.* 3. the latter end, *Great is the myſterie of godlineſs:* — What's that? *God was manifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ſeen of Angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.* Have we comprehended? have we attained? The Apoſtle *Paul* was far from thinking ſo, according to that account of him; *Not as if I had already attained, or were already perfect.* What, have we got to the bottom of theſe Myſteries? Are we able to fathom the depth of them? O, how little a thing do we know of theſe things! It was a good ſaying of one of the Ancients; *Many things, becauſe of the cuſtomary mentioning of them, they are ſlighted, which if they were but ſeriouſly weighed would cauſe admiration to aſtoniſhment. God manifeſted in the fleſh:* Why, it's a Myſtery that we may beſtow a whole Age of a thouſand years in ſtudying, and never be able to come to the full underſtanding of: Angels deſire to look into theſe things. Now, upon theſe accounts, upon the account of the ſubject matter of the Knowledge of Chriſt, it may well be required of Believers, that they do their utmoſt endeavour, that they may grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

I ſhall cloſe up for the preſent only with this one Argument further: It is the Saints duty to endeavour a Knowledge in the growth of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; for otherwiſe, truly, we do not anſwer the proviſion that God hath made to ſuch a purpoſe; we walk unworthy of the Goodneſs and Grace of God which hath diſcovered it ſelf this way,

way, in order to ſuch a growth. For, mark you; In the beginning of the World, upon the fall of *Adam*, the Goſpel it was but whiſpered: Whiſper, there was ſomething darkly, ſecretly, and couchantly (if I may ſo ſpeak) was hinted out; *The ſeed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpents head*; here was all the Goſpel was given out at firſt: Afterwards there began to be a little more diſcovery made of it to *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*: — Afterwards in *Moſes* time, and in *Moſes* days, there came to be a little more full explanation: — afterwards in the times of the Prophets, clearer & clearer diſcoveries. — But in the time of the Goſpel, when Chriſt came, then the *Day ſtar* ariſes, nay, the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* breaks out, and now we have clearer and clearer diſcoveries of the Myſterie concerning our Lord Jeſus. — And mark you, when Chriſt goes to Heaven, he ſends a token of his love to his Church and People, a Book of Myſteries, of Myſteries concerning the Knowledge of himſelf; and provides this very Book, that we might come to be well improved in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. — Now, conſider this; For as much as the Lord hath in his Wiſdom, out of his rich bounty hath been pleaſed thus to provide and to order out, that there ſhould be ſuch means and helps for our Improvement in the knowledge of Chriſt; truly we walk unworthy of this proviſion, if we do not put on with all induſtriouſneſs, to ſuch a purpoſe, that we may grow in the Knowledge of God. Let me but expreſs my ſelf thus; If ſo be you have a Veſſel moving upon the waters, if the water be ſhallow, and it be a low water, the Veſſel is ready to touch upon the ground; but if ſo be the water grow higher and higher, and the Tyde comes in

and

and ſprings up, then the Veſſel riſes higher and higher: So ſhould it be with the ſouls of Believers, being that God hath made a ſtream come in more ſtrongly, and the Tyde to riſe higher (as he hath done) in the courſe of holy Scripture; truly the endeavour of a Chriſtian ſhould be ſutable to ſuch proviſion, he ſhould endeavour to be upon his Improvements, and to grow in the Knowledge of Chriſt. Theſe things being thus accounted to you, in order to your convincement, that we ſhould endeavour a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour.

I ſhould now come to tell you, what this Knowledge is, for the nature of it: I muſt tell you this, That truly there are many have the Knowledge of Chriſt, and are grown up to a great meaſure of it; and yet for all that, their Knowledge will be their confutation at laſt.

I muſt tell you this, That howſoever we may be apt to lift up our ſelves in high conceits of our Knowledge, yet the very Devils are exceeding much in their Knowledge of Chriſt: *We know thee, who thou art, The holy one of God.* I tell you, There's never a Devil that's now under the chains of darkneſs, but they can ſpeak moſt learnedly concerning the Lord Jeſus, concerning his Perſon, — concerning his Nature, — concerning his Office: And how many learned men are there that are able to diſcourſe concerning Chriſt, concerning his Incarnation, and concerning his Death, and Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion, and this and that, and are able to inlarge themſelves this way, and yet they do (many of them) go down with their Knowledge to Hell: Therefore it is neceſſary for us to be well inſtructed in this Point, that we may know what this Knowledge

ledge is. —I would have ſpoken ſomething to it; only thus:

It is not a notional Knowledge: Take heed of a notional hiſtorical Knowledge, a Knowledge that you attain unto meerly by common report, and by a common eradiation of the Underſtanding; but look to it, that it be a Heart-knowledge, a cordial Knowledge, — a practical Knowledge, — ſuch a Knowledge as is a transforming Knowledge: For the truth on't is, If any man think he knows any thing of Chriſt, he knows nothing as he ought to know, if his Knowledge don't transform him. This is the ruine of ſouls, They know much of Chriſt, they are able to diſcourſe of the Doctrine of Juſtification, and Sanctification, and of Adoption, and other Myſteries of the Goſpel, and all lies floating in the brain, and there's nothing of its effectual operation upon the heart and conſcience of a ſinner. This is that that I would a little further ſpeak to you about, that ſo we may not miſtake our ſelves, and go with a Knowledge that lies dead upon our hands, and ſo come to fall under the deep and moſt dreadful ruine.

SERM.

SERM. XI.

I Was ſpeaking concerning this Knowledge, for the kind of it: Now I would ſtrengthen this cauſe I have in hand, concerning the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; I would ſtrengthen the cauſe what I could, and I ſhall do my beſt endeavour, that you may be as fully convinc'd as may be, How much it concerns Believers and Saints to grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Beſides all that hath been already ſpoken to the purpoſe, which indeed doth carry very convincing light with it, and is beyond all gain-ſaying. There is beſides all that hath been already ſpoken, ſome things further to be held forth unto you, whereby you may yet ſtand more fully convinc'd of it, That the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, is a Knowledge that we ſhould vigorouſly endeavour a growth and Improvement in.

As now to inſtance. Having ſpoken the laſt time of things that concern us, in reference to Chriſt; ſo I ſhall now further communicate thoſe things to you that concern this matter, in reference to our ſelves. If ſo be we be but that we profeſs to be, if we be ſuch as have the faith of the Goſpel, and are planted under the hopes of the Goſpel; truly, it doth very much concern us, in reſpect of our ſelves, to endeavour vigorouſly a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; and that in theſe ſeveral reſpects, which I would intreat you ſeriouſly to weigh and conſider. As,

Firſt, Our Duty is, to endeavour a growth in the Know-

Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Firſt, That we may be men and women of more able Judgments, be more Judicious and able to manage our Judgment of things.

2. That we may have the more benefit and comfort of our Conſciences, and with reſpect to our conſciences; our duty is to endeavour a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

3. With reſpect unto Goſpel-grace, and that there may be an increaſe in it.

4. With reſpect unto Goſpel-priviledges, and Benefits, and Comforts.

5. With reſpect to Goſpel-duties.

6. With reſpect unto a Goſpel-converſation. In the general, theſe things I now do further offer to your conſideration, and ſhall endeavour to give ſome inſight into them, and what they do import, that ſo if the Lord will pleaſe to proſper my endeavours among you, that you may come to ſet on more ſtrenuouſly, with ſtrength, and endeavour after a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Conſider firſt, It is required of us (ſuch as profeſs Godlineſs and the Faith of the Goſpel) that they be a wiſe, judicious and underſtanding People. *Be not*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *unwiſe*, *but underſtanding what the will of the Lord is*. 'Tis that which hath been earneſtly prayed for. So *David*, *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me, give me underſtanding*. — How earneſt was *Solomon* in that behalf, that he would give him a wiſe and an underſtanding heart? How earneſt was *Paul* with God on the behalf of the Church of the *Epheſians*, That their underſtandings might be enlightned? — God would have his

his People to be like himſelf; he is a judicious God, a God of Judgment; and he would have his People to be an underſtanding and judicious People, of diſcerning ſpirits, able to make a right Judgment of perſons and perſons, of things and things: This is the Will of God. — Now conſider, There is no Knowledge in all the World, that contributes ſo much to this, that we may come to be a wiſe, underſtanding and judicious People, as the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth. I remember what *Moſes* ſpeaks, in *Deut.* 4. That they ſhould be acknowledged upon the account of thoſe Laws, and Statutes, and Teſtimonies which were given them; they ſhould be acknowledged to be a wiſe and an underſtanding People. Why? Truly they were of high accompliſhment, as touching their wiſdom and underſtanding, and judgment; and that upon the account of thoſe Revelations that God did make to them. O, but how much higher will the advance be of a People, in wiſdom, and underſtanding, and judgment, that are well inſtructed in, and acquainted with the Myſteries of Chriſt, and the things that are to be known concerning him. Conſider now, What was the teaching of the Old Teſtament, to the teaching that was to be had under the New Teſtament, the Goſpel-teaching; when the time came that the Myſterie which had been kept ſecret, from Ages and Generations, ſhould be broken open, and laid out to the full of it? Oh, what an advantage was there then, for a People to come to good judgment and underſtanding! No Knowledge in all the World (I ſay) contributes ſo much to the purpoſe, of making Men and Women wiſe and judicious, as doth the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

By this Knowledge well improved (for I ſpeak of that) I ſpeak of the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, conſidered as well improved, when there is a conſiderable growth and increaſe in it: I ſpeak of this Knowledge in the improvement and increaſe in it, as the moſt pretious Knowledge, moſt beneficial to ſuch a purpoſe, for to accompliſh men and women for being a judicious underſtanding People, of diſcerning ſpirits. Conſider,

First of all, By the means of this Knowledge, we ſhall be the better able to make a judgment of our ſelves, our perſons, and conditions, and ſtates. Alas, beloved, What woful miſtakes are we apt to run upon, concerning our conditions God-ward! How many are there that think themſelves to be ſomething, when they are nothing at all; judge themſelves to be of a right Goſpel-ſpirit, when they are nothing ſo at all? — How many are there that account themſelves to be right in point of Religion and Godlineſs, well accompliſht, and that they are ſuch as will paſs in account with God, for good, and ſound, and upright men, right in the Myſterie of the Goſpel; whom God will reject and proteſt againſt, and proteſs of them, that he hath no pleaſure in them? — Then on the other hand, There are many poor ſouls that paſs a very ſad judgment upon themſelves, and are apt to give themſelves for ſtark naught, that they are not to be accounted of with God, that have deſerved rather to be rejected of him; when yet for all that, they are in his account, no other than noble Vines, a holy, a right ſeed; as the Prophet *Jeremiah* uſeth the expreſſion. Now, the reaſon of theſe miſtakes, in point of Judgment, concerning our ſelves and Eſtates; it muſt needs ariſe, eſpecially, either from the total want, or from

from a great deficiency in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. For, mark you; You muſt know that we are never ſo well able to judge of the Writing, as when we are well knowing of the Copy after which the Writing is to be drawn: We can never ſo well make a Judgment of the faſhion of a thing, unleſs we know the due pattern after which it is to be caſt; they that ſee the Copy, will be the better able to judge of the Writing that is to be drawn after the Copy; they that underſtand the ſtate of the Mold, will be the better able to judge of the Veſſel, whether it be right caſt and faſhioned, ſutable to the Mold. Now, conſider thus: Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he is the Copy after which a Believer, a Chriſtian is to be drawn up: He is the Mold into which a Chriſtian is to be faſhioned. The Apoſtle tells us, in *Rom.* 8. That *thoſe whom God hath predeſtinated, he hath predeſtinated to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the firſt-born among many brethren.* Thus it is, it is the great deſign of God concerning all his People that he will own; that they be conformed and faſhioned according to Chriſt: And ſuch as is the conſtitution of Chriſt, ſuch muſt be the conſtitution of a Chriſtian. Now, when we come to know, and to know to good purpoſe, the things that concern Chriſt; when we come to be made able to anſwer the Myſteries of the Goſpel concerning Chriſt, what a Chriſt he is, of what a make and conſtitution. (Pray conſider well:) The more we know of this Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, the better able ſhall we be to make a Judgment of our ſelves, and to eſcape thoſe dangerous miſtakes concerning our condition and ſtate, which we are apt to run upon; when we come to know, and to know

to ſome good degree what Chriſt is; what he is for his *Nature*, and *Diſpoſition*, and *Qualifications*, and *Conſtitution*; and that he is not made after the Law of a carnal Commandment, but after the power of an endleſs Life: That he is conſtituted a Prieſt after ſuch a manner; and ſo a Prophet, a King. When we come to know this to ſome purpoſe, the Conſtitution of Chriſt, what make he is of, how God hath ordered him, who is the Pattern and the Copy, after which a Chriſtian is to be drawn up; the more we underſtand and know of this, the better able ſhall we be to make a Judgment of our ſelves and ſtates, when we come to compare our ſelves with our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; when we can find, that as in the Print, there is letter for letter, there is Grace for Grace; there is ſtamp for ſtamp, Impreſſion for Impreſſion; when we can find this, when we come to know the original Copy, and then come to compare our ſelves with the Copy, the Writing that is drawn up in our own hearts;— when we come to underſtand what Conſtitution Chriſt is of, and underſtand that to ſome purpoſe, and then come to conſider how it is vvith our ſelves; then ſhall vve be the better able to make a Judgment of our condition and ſtate, and to ſay, I knovv that my heart is right, I knovv that my ſtate is good, I am able to avouch it, I can give a Judgment of my ſelf upon this account, becauſe I find the conformity to Chriſt my Head; I ſee there is an anſvvering to the Copy, and that I am dravvn up according to the Pattern. O Brethren, conſider vvell of this: We are ſaid to be made Kings and Prieſts unto God our Father. Why, novv, Kings and Prieſts? vve are ſuch as Chriſt, vvho vvas a King and a Prieſt; not after the Lavv (as I ſaid before)

before) of a carnal Commandment, but after the power of an endleſs Life; when we come to find the power of an endleſs Life in us, a ſuitableneſs unto Chriſt; when it's otherwiſe, it is but a pretence. As it may be ſaid according to that, in *Rev.* 2. *They ſay they are Jews and are not; they are of the Synagogue of Satan*; and ſo will many be found to be ſo, that do not correſpond to Chriſt, and do not anſwer Chriſt as the Pattern. This is that therefore, that we are to know and conſider, That it is neceſſary that Believers and Saints ſhould be well acquainted with the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe by that Knowledge we are to regulate our Judgments concerning our own perſons. And ſo the Church, as in *Rev.* 2. before-mentioned.

And ſo again, The like is to be ſaid concerning Doctrines, and concerning Worſhips; concerning the Doctrines that are held forth, and concerning the Worſhips that are performed. Why, Brethren, there are many Doctrines preach'd in the World, that are no better than chaff to the Wheat; and no other than droſs to the Gold. *What is the chaff to the wheat?* as the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaks: *And what is the droſs to the Gold?* Now, how ſhould we judge, but by the help of the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt? The more we improve in that Knowledge, the better able ſhall we be to make a Judgment of Doctrines.

And ſo likewiſe of Worſhips: Such Worſhips as ſhall have acceptance vvith God. Why? they muſt be Worſhips that are according to Chriſt; and the more vve improve in the Knovvledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, the more able ſhall vve be to make a Judgment of theſe things. O!

Christ, he is a spiritual Christ: *Though we have known him* (saith the Apostle) *after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him so no more*: He was made after the power of an endless Life, and not after the Law of a carnal Commandment; and his Worship is drawn up, not after the Law of a carnal Commandment, but after the power of an endless Life, sutable to himself. O, consider of this, and take heed of carnal hearts, and of carnal Services, that hold no correspondency with our Lord Jesus Christ; so that upon this account, you may see and stand convinc'd of it, That it concerns us very much to endeavour a growth and increase in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, because by the means of that Knowledge, we are inabled to make a Judgment of Churches, and their Constitutions;— we are inabled to make a Judgment of Doctrines and of Worships, which are to be performed.

2. Yet further. The Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a Knowledge that Christians and Believers should endeavour a growth in, and that as with respect unto their Judgments, that they may come to be well accomplisht, and to become a judicious People. So likewise 2ly. In regard of their Conscience: Conscience, truly it is a great word, and I wish that the interpretation of it were better known. The interpretation of Conscience; I tell you Brethren, That every man and woman hath a Conscience within them, and this Conscience is either his cordial Friend, or it will be his dreadful Enemy; it will either be a Friend or a Fury; either his best Friend on earth, or his greatest Enemy on earth; Conscience will be a Friend if it be right, but God is a greater Friend; Conscience will be an Enemy,

Enemy, I, but God is a greater Enemy: *If our heart condemn us*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *God is greater than our heart, and he knows all things.* — But, on earth, there is not a greater Friend, nor is there a greater Enemy than a man's Conſcience. I tell you this, That your Conſciences, when you come to know them, and to be acquainted with them, and when they come to be awakened and ſet on work, your Conſciences will either create a Heaven within you, or elſe they will create a Hell within you. Truly, Conſcience will do thus; It will either make your life to be a Heaven, or elſe it will make it to be a Hell. I'le give you two Inſtances, and I think that more remarkable Inſtances cannot be given. — To inſtance in *Paul* and *Judas*: There was never man (I think) in the World, that was able to ſpeak more from experience concerning his Conſcience, and how it befriended him, than *Paul* was; never man better ſtudied in Conſcience; never man more befriended by Conſcience, and he knew the benefit of it, and was exceedingly rejoyced in it: And there was never man that was more terrified by his Conſcience (I think) than *Judas* was, and no man more able to ſpeak to the terror of his Conſcience, than he was. *Paul* makes his boaſt of his Conſcience: *This is our rejoycing, The teſtimony of our Conſcience.* And, *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good Conſcience*: And ſtill upon every occaſion, *My Conſcience bears me witneſs.* O, this Conſcience of *Paul*, it ſung within his boſom, like a bird of Paradiſe! O, this good Conſcience of *Paul*, notwithſtanding all the troubles and perſecutions he meets with, his Conſcience befriends him, and doth keep him up in heart, and he is cheered with it, under all the troubles and diſquietments that he meets with in this World.

Thus it was with him, as to his Conſcience.

And as for *Judas*, his Conſcience was a Fury within him, when he came to be awakened and had the guilt of blood upon him: O, how Conſcience rages! it creates a Hell within him, and he is in Hell before he comes there; as many are, and will be, when God comes to awake their Conſciences. Now, thus it was with *Judas*, and he was ſo hurried, and agaſter'd, and amazed, and affrighted, that he was a *Magor-miſſabib*, a terror to himſelf. Thus it was with *Judas*, and that by reaſon of his awakened Conſcience, labouring under the guilt of his iniquities and impieties that he had committed. Well, this is Conſcience, the beſt friend on Earth, or the greateſt and dreadfulleſt enemy on Earth. A man had better have all the World againſt him, than have his Conſcience againſt him; and if all the World be againſt a man, yet, if his Conſcience be for him, if his Conſcience will befriend him; it will inable him to bear up with comfort notwithſtanding.

I, but now conſider, that it is by the well-improvement of the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; it is by the well-improvement of that knowledge, and by endeavouring an advance, and a growth and increaſe in that: this is the thing that I drive at; it is by this means, and upon this account, that the Conſcience comes to be ſet to rights, and is inabled to do the part of a dear and cordial Friend, which it will never do upon other tearms. I'll tell you what, your Conſciences will never do the part of a friend to you to any purpoſe, but rather ſtorm againſt you, and make you to become as *Magor-miſſabibs*, terrors to your ſelves; unleſs you be well inſtructed in the

know-

knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Men and women may daub with their Conſciences, and ſooth up themſelves, and lay their Conſcience upon a pillow, when it's ſick, and diſtemper'd, and ill at eaſe, and would be breaking out: men may take this and that courſe to ſtill their Conſcience for a little while; O, but there will never, never be any true quieted peace, nor any kindly ſettlement of it, nor any friendlyneſs of it to us, if we be not well underſtanding in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. It is clearly by the advancement that we make in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, that we come to have our Conſciences ſet right, and to perform the office of a dear and cordial friend to us. Alas Brethren, conſider thus; men and women may have gone on in a fair and plauſible profeſſion of Chriſtianity for many years, and have been in good account for Chriſtians, and have had friendly reſpect from the Godly: but when they come to fall under a temptation, an awakening and ſtinging temptation; or when they come to lye upon their death-beds, and have a repreſentation made to them of their condition and ſtate, they are in a moſt reſtleſs condition, they do not know what in the World will become of them; but they are like unto the raging Sea: and this is like to prove the condition of many poor creatures, that make a fair profeſſion: the Lord give them wiſdom to look into it, they are in a reſtleſs condition, like unto the raging Sea, that caſts up mire and dirt, and cannot be quiet. O, it's true, I have had a profeſſion, and have had a name for a Chriſtian, and I have been inſtalled in Church-priviledges, and I have eat and drank with the Saints,

Saints, and walk'd in communion with them; but now all this, and a great deal more of this, that may be accounted, will not quiet the ſpirit; and the poor creature cannot tell where to reſt, but tumbles and toſſes, and rouls up and down, and knows not what in the World will become of it. Thus it will be; therefore we had need look about us, and to conſider wiſely of it. — Why, what's the reaſon of this? why truly, principally upon this account; becauſe the knowledge of Chriſt was not better ſtudied, and that it was not purſued more eagerly, according to the true ſtate of it; and the Conſcience was not duly principled with the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

And ſo likewiſe; there are others, Godly perſons; the Godly perſons, concerning whom, it may be very comfortably hoped, that their hearts are right with God, and that they have the root of the matter in them; and yet, in a day of temptation, at a great loſs, and toſſed with tempeſts, and wofully ſhattered and broken; and do not know where to reſt the ſole of their foot: poor ſouls, that are roving, and toſſed from poſt to pillar, and cannot tell how to have any quiet injoyments: — what's the reaſon of this? O, it is in a ſpecial manner to be reckoned to the want of a due information in the myſterie of Chriſt; and, becauſe there is not a well-improved knowledge concerning our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. But the poor creature is principled much, what with principles of Legality, with Legal principles, which will never ſettle the Conſcience, nor never bring any ſolid peace unto the Conſcience. This is the reaſon why many poor creatures are ſo ſhattered

tered and broken as they are, and cannot have a comfortable day; paſs a long from time to time, and upon every occaſion, they are under woful perplexities. — What's the reaſon of this? — becauſe of Legal principles in their Conſcience; by occaſion whereof, the Conſcience is ever and anon riſing up, and preſenting matter of terror to the poor creatures; and it knows not what to do, nor how to have any comfortable injoyment of it ſelf: — upon this account it is, becauſe we are not well ſtudyed in the myſteries of the Goſpel, in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Thus it is; We muſt know, that all the knowledge concerning God, conſidered out of Chriſt, as he is an Infinite Glorious Being; as he is a God of Infinite Sovereignty, of Infinite Power; as he is a God that is Perfect in Knowledge, in Holyneſs, and Wiſdom, and the like: all this Knowledge, — and the Knowledge of God in the works of his Creation; — and the Knowledge that we have of our ſelves, and of the ſtate wherein we were created. The Knowledge of the Covenant, under which we were planted in the beginning of the Creation: — The Knowledge of the Law, and of the Sovereignty of that: All this knowledge will but raiſe up terror in the ſoul, and make the Conſcience to rage and ſtorm; nothing of this Knowledge that is able to calm and quiet the Conſcience. No, let a man preſent to himſelf never ſo fully, all his moralities, and duties, and ſervices, whatſoever he can account concerning himſelf: notwithſtanding this, Conſcience rages ſtill; there's nothing of ſatisfaction to the Conſcience: Conſcience is ſtill all this while like the raging Sea, and caſts out mire and dirt, and cannot be quiet. —

Why?

Why? — Why because it hath nothing to reſt upon; nothing that it knows concerning God, his Infinite Majeſty, Glory, Purity, and Holyneſs, that gives a bottom for the Conſcience to reſt upon; but the Conſcience rather comes the more to rage and ſtorm; O, he is a Holy God, and my Conſcience tells me, that I am a filthy, loathſome, polluted creature: He is a Righteous and Juſt God, and I am a rebellious wretch, that have provoked Him moſt dreadfully: I have the repreſentations before me, of ſuch and ſuch moralities, and ſervices: I, but the Law is a ſtrict Law, and I have not anſwered it in any thing that I have done. Now, it is only by the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. The Knowledge of the Myſtery which was kept ſecret from Ages and Generations, it is only by the knowledge of that Myſterie, that the Conſcience comes to be quiet, it comes to find a bottom there: when this Knowledge comes, there's a plank caſt out after the Ship-wrack. O, when the ſoul comes to hear of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he was ſent of God, to be the Saviour, to make ſatisfaction to his Juſtice, by the offering up of himſelf a ſacrifice; that he hath ſhed blood, and the blood of attonement, an available blood: when the Conſcience comes to know this, and this knowledge comes to be wrought in a ſoul; then Conſcience begins to be quiet. The Apoſtle argues to this purpoſe, in *Heb.* 10. *The Law*, ſaith he, *having a ſhaddow of good things to come*; for it had its worldly Sanctuary, and its Prieſthood, a pompous Prieſthood, and the Sacrifices, and the blood of Bulls, and Goats: I, but, ſaith he, Theſe were never able to purge the Conſcience, and to make the comers thereunto perfect;

to

to give them peace, and to bring them to the injoyment of reſt; they could find no reſt here; For, ſaith he, if ſo be that they had been available, then would they not have ceaſed to be offered, becauſe the comers to theſe ſacrifices, being once made perfect, ſhould have had no more Conſcience of ſins; their Conſciences no more labouring under the apprehenſion, and the repreſentation of their former ſins, they would have been made perfect, and would have had no more Conſcience of ſin. But, ſaith he, every time they come to offer theſe Sacrifices, there is a remembrance of ſins: — Why? — Why becauſe the knowledge of all this, the performance of all this, would not anſwer the exigency of the Conſcience, and lay a foundation for the Conſcience to bottom upon. But, ſaith he, Chriſt, He comes in, and He, by one offering of Himſelf, by the ſhedding of his own blood once, He hath perfected for ever, them that are ſanctified; and now the Conſcience comes to be quiet. O, this is the knowledge will quiet the Conſcience. Therefore now, judge with your ſelves, whether there be not infinite cauſe, that profeſſors that mind their ſouls, and the peace of their hearts, and the comfort of their Conſciences; whether it doth not infinitely concern them, to endeavour an increaſe and growth in the Knowledge of the Lord Jeſus: That ſo, when Conſcience would be upon ſtirring, and ſtartling, and ſtumbling; the ſoul being well verſed in the myſterie, and underſtanding to good purpoſe what the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is, the ſoul may be able to relieve it ſelf: Well, be it what it will; let Devils charge, and let men charge, let them charge to the full; I bleſs God, I have the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

Christ. I understand the mysterie concerning my Lord Jesus: I have endeavoured to make a good progression in this knowledge, and to accommodate it to my purpose. I know who Christ was, what a Priest he was, and what blood he shed, and what a sacrifice he offered; and I know, that the Infinite Justice of God, is not able to make any exception against this sacrifice and blood. God hath rescued me, well may my Conscience rescue me: God is satisfied, well may my Conscience be satisfied. Well now, for my part, I know not what in all the World to preach to you, that is more material and momentous than these things. And these two things that I have laboured about this morning; — as touching a Christians accomplishment, for being wise, and judicious; and that is, by a due improvement in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. — And likewise, concerning the Conscience; and how that comes to be rectified, and set to rights, and to stand a mans Friend in every time of need; and that he may sweetly injoy himself, and come to have a Rock to repose upon in a storm and tempest; how a soul may come to find a rest for it self in all the tossings and turmoylings in the World: and that it is the knowledge, or improving in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I say, these are momentous things, and we should well consider of it; that of all knowledge, there is none that we should endeavour a growth and increase in, as the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

SERM.

SERM. XII.

I Shall now proceed unto ſome other things, which will yet more fully evidence it to us, that it doth very much concern beleeving ſouls, to endeavour a growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

The third thing, according to this order, which I propound, is, That by growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall be advantaged for a growth in Grace. It ſeems, and to me, it more than ſeems, to be implyed in the Conjunction of theſe two Requiries: *Grow in Grace*, grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. It ſeems to imply thus much; as if ſo be the Apoſtle ſhould have ſaid, Grow in Grace, and that you may do ſo; ſee that you grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. They are never like to come to any eminency in Grace, and to make any conſiderable advance in Grace, that make little or no progreſs in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. And they, that in uprightneſs of ſoul, do make it their buſineſs to increaſe, and grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; they are the moſt likely perſons for to make the moſt conſiderable advantage in the Graces of the Spirit of God. There is ſomething in it, that the Spirit of God, by the miniſtry of his Apoſtle *Peter*, ſhould propound theſe two requiries in this Conjunction one with another. Require a growth in Grace; and in order

order thereunto, a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.——— Now here, first of all, I shall speak a little more generally; and that, but in a touch: —— And then, shall endeavour to evince this, by giving an account of this in a more particular way.

You are to know, that the first plantation of Grace in the soul, it is made in the way, and by the means of the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, communicated to the soul through the Spirit: there can be no Grace in the heart, where there is no Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is the Knowledge of Christ, and of the Gospel, and of the Gospel-mysteries concerning Christ, by the means whereof, Grace comes to be planted in the soul. The Prophet, in *Psal.* 19. gives us this account of the Law of the Lord; that it is a perfect Law, converting the soul. — What Law is this? — understand it of the Law of Grace and Faith: Not of the Law of Works: and there by *Law*, you are to understand, the Doctrine of God concerning Christ, held forth in the Gospel, in the Scriptures of Prophets and Apostles. And he saith, that it is the *Law* of God, this Law of *Faith*, this Gospel-Law, which is the blessed Instrument of converting the soul.

Before Conversion, there's no Grace; when Conversion is wrought, then Grace takes place in the heart: an unconverted person, is a graceless person, let him be what he will for his moralities, and plausible conversation: when once Conversion is wrought, then Grace comes to be in the soul: and this Conversion is not brought about, but by the Gospel, which holds forth unto us, the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let a

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man preach moral Duties never ſo clearly and plainly; moral Duties, all the Duties of the moral Law, conſidered as it holds forth a Covenant of Works, as it holds forth a Duty to God, Duty to Man: I ſay, let a man preach never ſo clearly and plainly man's Duty, he will never be able to convert the ſoul; that is not the converting Miniſtry, no, it is not; 'tis not the quickning Miniſtry. I remember how the Apoſtle argues to the *Galatians*; *Received ye the Spirit* (ſaith he) which Spirit is a Spirit of Grace, *by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?* That is the Doctrine of Faith. Why? ſaith he, you did never receive the Spirit, which is a Spirit of Grace, by the works of the Law, and by the hearing of the Law; but you received the Spirit, by the hearing of Faith, by hearing the Doctrine of Faith, the Doctrine of the Goſpel, the Doctrine concerning the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, made known unto you; in that way the Spirit came, and the Spirit with the Grace of it. It is, therefore, the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that is the bleſſed inſtrumental means whereby there comes to be the firſt plantation of Grace in the Soul.

I, this that brings men to believe, it's the Goſpel; men will never believe to the ſaving of their ſouls, till they come to know Jeſus Chriſt.

They will never repent with a Repentance to ſalvation, till they come to know Jeſus Chriſt: All the knowledge in the World will never bring over a ſoul to Faith and Repentance, to the Love of God, but the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. When men come once to know the Myſterie of the Goſpel, to know the Grace of God in Chriſt, to know the Myſteries concerning the Salvation and Redemption of the World by the Lord Jeſus; this will bring

them to Faith (if any thing will) this will bring them to Repentance; this is the inſtrumental means whereby they come to have their hearts warmed with the Love of God. The preaching of the Law, as a Covenant of Works, moral Duties, and preſſing of them, without the line of the Goſpel, and the Covenant of Grace; without reference to that, this will but rather provoke and ſtir up the corruption of a man: The Law worketh wrath againſt a man, works wrath in a man; it raiſes up wrath, it irritates thoſe curſed corrupt Principles that are in him. O, this is a Myſterie that we ſhould be well acquainted withal.

O, it is the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the Goſpel: This is that that breaks the heart, and makes the heart to work out after God. Never ſhall we begin to love God, nor to love Chriſt, till ſuch time as we come to know the Doctrines of the Goſpel, concerning our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. I would with all my heart that every one of you were but well ſtudied in this Myſterie, that now I am ſpeaking to, That it is the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt held forth in the Goſpel, that is the means and inſtrument to plant Grace, to make the firſt Plantation of it in the Soul. As,

2ly. Know, That as it is the means of its firſt Plantation, ſo it is the means and inſtrument of its Augmentation: I am ſpeaking according to the Doctrine of the Text, concerning a growth in Grace, and in the Knowledge of Chriſt. This growth in Grace, is brought about by a growth in the Knowlegde of our Lord Jeſus; the more we know, the more we ſhall believe, the more we ſhall repent, the more we ſhall love, the more holy ſhall we be (as I

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ſhall ſhew you, God aſſiſting.) I think this Point will take up a little more time than other Particulars will, but it will be time well ſpent.

Now yet further, to clear up this, That it is the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and the increaſe in that, which doth promote an increaſe in Grace. You ſhall find in Scripture, and truly it is worthy your conſideration (to my apprehenſion) that the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, it is put for all Grace. 'Tis a conſiderable thing, that when God will make a promiſe of all grace, he doth epitomiſe that promiſe thus: *I will give them an heart to know me.* When God comes to make a promiſe to his People concerning Grace, he puts it into this Form, *I give them an heart to know me.* O how much is there complicated in that expreſſion, *I will give them an heart to know me!* He doth not ſay, an *Head* to know me. Indeed that's a *Gift*, but Knowledge in the *heart*, is a *Grace*: It is the beginning of Grace, and that which contributes to all the Graces; an *heart to know me.* To *know me*; — with what a kind of Knowledge? with a *fiduciat Knowledge*, a Knowledge of *Truſt*, and an *affectionate Knowledge*, a Knowledge of *Love*, and with a Knowledge of *Deſire*, and a Knowledge of Submiſſion; *I will give them an heart to know me.* And you ſhall find likewiſe to this purpoſe our Saviour ſpeaks, *Joh.* 17. 3. *This is life eternal.* Why, *This* is life eternal, *To know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* Mark it, This is eternal life in the *Cauſes* of it; this is eternal life in the *way and means* of it, *To know thee, and to know him whom thou haſt ſent*: To know *God in Chriſt*; this is eternal life.

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Then ſurely it imports Faith, and it imports

Love, and it imports Holineſs; for eternal Life doth not come over to a ſoul, but in the way of *Believing*, and in the way of Holineſs, and in the way of Love, and in the way of all the Graces: So that I ſay, The Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, it is ſuch a Knowledge, as under which is comprehended the Graces of the Spirit: And truly this is a conſideration of weight in order to this purpoſe, that we may come to be more in our indearings of it, and more in our endeavourings after it.

But now I ſhall endeavour to make this yet more fully to appear, by an induction of Particulars; ſo as that you may ſtand convinc'd of this, that the way to grow in Grace, is to grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Conſider firſt of all, That by growth in this Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, we are moſt happily advantaged for a growth in Faith and Believing; it is very conſiderable, and I will commend it to you to be ſeriouſly weighed, That as *Knowledge* is put for *Grace* more generally, ſo *Knowledge* is put for *Faith*, for juſtifying Faith, according to that remarkable Scripture that you have in *Iſa.* 53. where the Lord ſpeaks to this purpoſe by the Prophet; *By his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtifie many.* Now, do but weigh that paſſage, and obſerve this expreſſion: This is ſpoken concerning Chriſt our Lord and Saviour. And ſaith the Prophet, *By the knowledge of him ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtifie many.* — Why doth the Knowledge of Chriſt juſtifie? — Why the Devils know him, and yet they are not juſtified? Carnal Profeſſors, they have a Knowledge of him, and yet they are not juſtified: I, but that is ſuch a kind of Knowledge, as that they that have it, ſhall be juſtified:

fied; And Christ, by the Knowledge of him shall justifie many —— Now, what Knowledge is this? —— It must needs be understood of a fiducial Knowledg, a Knowledge of Faith; such a Knowledge as is a Knowledge of Dependance, a Knowledge of Recumbency and Relyance upon the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no other Knowledge whereby Christ can justifie souls, but by such a Knowledge as this: And so I say, The Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ it is put for Faith, and is used to be set forth unto us, The faith whereby souls are justified, and so everlastingly saved.

But now yet more fully to clear up this, That by growth in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus, there comes to be a prosperous and happy growth in Faith.

We will consider first of all, What there is belonging unto a well-grown and improved Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then you will be able clearly (if so be that there be any spiritualness of understanding) to see how this Knowledge duly improved, doth draw out the faith of a Believer, and how it doth most happily influence his Faith, and is as the pouring out of water upon a Plant, or at the root of a Tree, which makes the Plant to thrive, and grow, and prosper, and shoot up a main. This will appear that this benefit comes over to us by our having the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ advantaged in us. Now, consider what doth properly belong to a well improved Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is requisite, in order to a due improvement and growth in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,

First, That he be known as touching his Person,

That he is God bleſſed for evermore, God with God, in full equality with the Father and the Spirit, and accounts it no robbery to claim ſuch an equality; as *Great* as the Father, as *Good* as the Father, as *Holy* as the Father, as *Mighty* as the Father. Thus it is; He is God with God. — And 2ly. That he is not only God with God, but he is God-Man; that he might be both fit to deal with God for Man, and with Man for God. That's the firſt thing that I propound: I ſhall make the accommodation of them by and by; and having propounded the things that belong to this well improved Knowledge, then I ſhall come to offer it to your Conſideration, how the Grace of Faith is moſt happily influenced by this Knowledge thus improved.

2. It belongs to well improved Knowledge, for to know, that this Chriſt, God-Man, is the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, by an act of eternal Generation.

3. It's requiſite to a well improved Knowledge, That ſouls do know and underſtand, that this Chriſt, God-Man, the eternal Son of the Father, that he is the Son of his deareſt Love, and did from all eternity lodge in his bleſſed boſom, that his heart is infinitely ſet upon him. And then,

4. It belongs to this Knowledge, That ſouls do underſtand, that this Chriſt, God-Man, the eternal Son of the Father, the dearly beloved of his Soul, is ſuch as he doth take infinite complacency and contentment in; he is pleaſed in him, and delighted in him; upon this very account, becauſe of the willingneſs which he hath manifeſted to appear in the behalf of poor Souls. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*; he in whom my ſoul delights.

5. It is requiſite to a well improved Knowledge of Chriſt, That we underſtand, that by an eternal Decree, God hath choſen, and appointed, and deſigned, this Son, God-Man, this Beloved, this Perſon ſo much delighted in; That he hath choſen him according to an eternal purpoſe and Decree, for to be the great Mediator between God and Man. This is neceſſary likewiſe to be known, that ſo there may be a due improvement of the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *The Lord hath declared the decree, Thou art my Son*, and I have appointed thee: He hath decreed him, and deſigned him to ſuch a purpoſe, according to that decree, in *Iſa.* 42. *Behold* (ſaith the Prophet) *my ſervant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth*: He is the choſen of God from all Eternity to ſuch a purpoſe.

6. This is neceſſary to a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, That it be known and underſtood, that this Chriſt, God-Man, the Son of the Father, the Beloved of his Soul, the Perſon that he delights in, that he hath made choice of, is likewiſe moſt fully commiſſioned by the Father, for to perform the Office of a Mediator, to all thoſe intents and purpoſes, and in all ſuch wayes, wherein he may accompliſh that great Deſign concerning the Redemption and Salvation of poor Souls. God hath commiſſioned him, he hath choſen him, called him, and ſent him into the world, and ſealed him up, according to Scripture expreſſion, *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, and he hath anointed me to preach good tydings*: — *Him hath God the Father ſealed.* As in *Joh.* 6. he hath a full commiſſion from God ſealed up unto him, for ſuch a purpoſe. — He is commiſſioned of God, being the great Prophet, to teach and inſtruct his

People in the Myſteries of his Will: *A Prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you, like unto me.* He is commiſſioned of God to be a Prieſt, and God hath ſworn concerning him, according to that, in *Pſal.* 110. *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchiſedech.* — And, then he hath commiſſioned and ſealed him up to be a King: The King of his Church, to rule in the hearts of his People, and to ruine his Enemies. This belongs to well improved Knowledge, That we come to know and underſtand that this Jeſus Chriſt, God-Man, is thus commiſſioned.

7. It belongs to a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, That, as he is thus commiſſioned, ſent and ſealed of God to all theſe intents and purpoſes; ſo likewiſe he is accompliſht by God every way, moſt compleatly accompliſhed for to bring about the Deſign that he is commiſſioned for. The great God hath impowered him, and accompliſht him, in the moſt full manner that poſſibly can be; God hath not given him the Spirit by meaſure, the Lord hath given him the fulneſs of the Spirit, he hath given him all fulneſs: *It pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* Fulneſs of Wiſdom, fulneſs of Grace, all fulneſs of the Spirit; he hath all fulneſs in him.

8. We are to Conſider, That this belongs to a well improved Knowledge; that theſe accompliſhments of Chriſt, and this proviſion that is made in him, it is ordered unto Communication; he is the great Truſtee of Heaven and Earth: *He aſcended on high, and he received gifts for men.* Why, he received them as their great Truſtee; God hath committed to him a truſt, for the benefit and behoof of poor Souls. This belongs to a well improved Knowledge

ledge in Christ, That all the fulness that is in him, it is for Communication, that poor Souls might be the better for it.

9. It belongs to a well improved Knowledge of Christ, That there be a due understanding of this, that Christ was from the beginning most willing to comply with the Counsel of God concerning him; and that it was the joy of his heart to ingage himself in the behalf of poor sinners, to make reconciliation to God as their Peace; to satisfie the Justice of God he was most willing, and it was the delight of his Soul to be put upon this thing. This belongs to a well improved Knowledge, to understand, that Christ had no reluctancy of spirit, when this matter was propounded to him; and when the matter was in debate, Christ came in with no Negatives, made no Objections, but answered thus: O my Father, 'tis thy Will, 'tis my joy; it pleaseth thee to design me to such a purpose, O my Father, thy will be done, my heart delights in it: Thou hast prepared me a body; O, I come into the World with that body, and I delight to do thy Will: Though I fore-apprehend all the sorrow, all the smart, all the shame, all the sufferings, all the burden, all those pressures that I must undergo in the managing of this great and glorious work and service; yet I stick at nothing: O, Father, it's meat and drink to me; I go about this work and service with as much content and complacency of soul, as ever a hungry man went to eat his meat. And then,

10. It belongs to a well improved Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, That we know and understand, that according to this Design of God, and suitably to his accomplishments, and suitably to his willing ingaging of himself, he hath laid

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out himself to the utmost; in a way of doing, in a way of suffering; — in a way of doing, fulfilling all righteousness in an active way, in the course of his life, and conversing here in the world: — In a way of suffering; by the offering up of himself a Sacrifice unto God, he hath made an Attonement, he hath satisfied infinite Justice, he hath pacified infinite Wrath, he hath paid the Debt to the utmost farthing: That now the Justice of God doth make Declaration, that it is fully satisfied in what hath been performed by the Lord Jesus Christ. This is belonging to a well improved Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. That now which Christ said upon the Cross, *It is finished*, God from Heaven declares in the Gospel: O, I have full satisfaction, I have nothing to object against those poor Souls, that my Son hath ingaged for; I have a full payment, to the very utmost farthing.

11. It belongs to a well improved Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we understand this: That having performed all that Justice could require, in a way of doing, — or in a way of suffering, — That he rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and that God hath given him preferment, that God hath given him the highest preferment, upon his obedience and satisfaction to his Justice, and upon the performance of this great Work and Service that he was designed unto; God hath advanced him to the highest top of Honour, he hath given him a name above every name; he hath set him at his own right Hand, above all Principalities and Powers.

12. It belongs to the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, That we know how Jesus Christ,

Christ, thus advanc'd on High, and thus raised up to a top of preferment, how he doth improve that preferment: He is now in Heaven, he is at God's right Hand, he is in fullest Glory. How doth he improve this Glory and Honour that is conferred upon him? — Improve it; — He sets his heart upon this, that there may be an Improvement of all the interest that he hath in God; all that Glory, and Power, and Majesty, and Dominion that he is now invested withal; he sets his heart upon this, that he may improve this for the benefit and behoof of his People here upon Earth: He makes it his continual work and business to be negotiating with God for poor Souls, for whom he hath shed his blood, and on whose behalf he hath made satisfaction to infinite Justice; he doth continually appear in Heaven before God, to make intercession for them.

Now, do but lay all this together, and here's the well improved Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which I have endeavoured thus to knit up together in this compass, and to set out before you: And here's the great Mysterie of the Gospel lying in these things, which I have held out this morning.

Now, the next thing to do is this, To let you see how all this Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, in every part and parcel of it, doth draw out the heart and soul of a Beleever, and doth most happily influence it; so that all this Knowledge is as a fatning water that doth nourish a Plant: Faith being planted in the soul, and this water of Gospel-Knowledge, concerning our Lord Jesus, being thus poured upon it, why as a fatning water, it makes the plant of Faith to grow and shoot up amain. There is never an experienced Christian, that

knows

knows what believing means, and is upon the exercise of Faith, and hath set his heart upon this, that he may make an Improvement of his Faith; there is never an experienced Beleever but is able to set to his Seal, Oh, in this Knowledge thus wrought out, and thus spread forth before me, in this Knowledge my Faith lives, and thrives, and prospers, and swims up and down with all delight, as the Fish in the water. You may easily apprehend now, how a Believers Faith will grow and increase, and receive strength and nourishment, and shoot up amain, upon the due consideration of these things that I have suggested.

1. As now, When a poor Beleever shall think thus with himself, Why do I hesitate? Why have I a fluctuating heart? why is not my heart setled and fixt, and come to be full of confidence in God? Why I consider thus, That that Jesus which is the object of my Faith, he is God over all, blessed for ever; would I have a more able Saviour than a God: It is not an Angel that I am commanded to place my trust in; no, it is God, blessed for ever, he that was God with God, from all Eternity, as great as God, as good as God: Why should I flag in my spirit? why should I faint? why should I have any miss-givings? Have not I a God to trust upon?

2. And then, He is God; I, He is God-man: where can I promise my self pitty, bowels, compassion, if not from a man; a man that is in union with God, and in union with God to this purpose; that he might be accomplish'd, that he might be every way most compassionate, and suitable to such an undertaking?

3. And then again, This Jesus is the Son, the Son

Son of the Father; where can I place my truſt and confidence ſo freely, as upon the King of Heaven's Son? He is the Son of the Father; nay, he is his *dearly Beloved* Son; the Father loves him, delights in him, he delights to hear his Prayer, he pleaſed him in all things.

4. Nay, why ſhould not I be ſtrong in my Faith in Chriſt; foraſmuch as this Jeſus, this Son, this beloved Son, this delightful Son, is the perſon that the Great God hath choſen and deſign'd to ſuch a purpoſe? and it is the will of God, that every poor ſoul ſhould fly to him, and have its recumbency upon him.

5. And then again; when I conſider that this Chriſt is commiſſioned by the Father, he is ſent into this World upon this account, that he might ſave, and make reconciliation.

6. And then, he is every way accompliſh'd: if he were a deficient Chriſt, there were ſomething to make my ſpirit to flag; but he is moſt fully accompliſh'd; all power is given to him; he is able to ſave to the utmoſt, all that come unto God by him.

7. And then when I come to conſider, and ponder, that it is meat and drink to Chriſt, to do the will of his Father; and he, with the greateſt content of heart, performed this work, and made ſatisfaction to the Juſtice of God, for poor ſinners.

8. And then when I come to conſider, that this Jeſus is now in Heaven, at Gods Right-hand; God the Father hath given him Glory and Honour: O what incouragement have I to come to him?

9. And then when I conſider, that all the truſt that is committed to him, all the treaſure that is

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laid up in him, is for the benefit and behoof of poor ſouls; why ſhould not I then be incouraged to let out my heart upon him, and to have the ſtrongeſt confidence, that I ſhall be the better for him? I tell you Brethren, that all this knowledge doth ſtrongly influence the Faith of a Beleever: therefore, well may the Apoſtle require the knowledge of the Lord Jeſus, in order to a growth in Grace; and in particular, to a growth in Faith. I would only give in that inſtance, in 1 *Pet.* 1. It's a Text that doth fully ſuit our preſent purpoſe: ſaith he, You by him believe in God, that raiſed him up from the dead, and gave him Glory, that your Faith and Hope might be in God: — Pray do but weigh this, *you believe in God*, (ſaith he) *who raiſed Jeſus from the dead*; and when he had ſo done, *he gave him Glory*: He preferr'd him to the greateſt Honour and Dignity, ſet him at his own Right-hand: — and wherefore this? *That your Faith*, (in knowing this) that he that was your great undertaker here on earth, travell'd in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, that he might accompliſh the work of Redemption and Salvation. This Jeſus, after he had done his work, and ſuffered what he was to undergo here in the World; God did raiſe him again from the dead; and when he had raiſed him, he takes him to Heaven, and gives him Glory there; ſets him at his own Right-hand, advances him to the higheſt top of Honour: — And wherefore thus? *That your Faith and Hope might be in God*; that you might come to him with the fulleſt confidence, and rely upon him. — Now, all this that I have accounted to you concerning a well-improved knowledge in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; it doth exceeding liberally contri-

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bute to the promoting of a Beleevers Faith and Grace. And, becauſe I can proceed no further now; if there be any ſouls, that are ſtrangers to Chriſt, and to the Faith of the Goſpel; will you but drink of theſe waters? O, ſet your hearts, that you may drink of this bleſſed Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; and ſee whether theſe waters will not warm your hearts, and make you to ſparkle out in love to Chriſt, in longings after Chriſt! —And for you, that are called out to the participation of Grace, and have the Faith of God begun in you: O, as ever you deſire to grow up in the Faith of the Goſpel, labour to be well improved in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: O, dwell upon the meditation of theſe Myſteries that I have given you this morning a hint of. If ever you deſire to be well improved in your Faith; it muſt be, by your being well improved in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

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SERM. XIII.

I Shall now proceed to what remains;

What hath been ſpoken concerning Faith; and how the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt daly improved, is to the growth of that. The ſame may be ſpoken concerning Goſpel-*hope*; The *hope of the Righteous*, which is called, *a Tree of Life*: — compared to an *Anchor*; *Sure, and ſtedfaſt, entring within the vail, whither the forerunner hath entered.* Now, by improving in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, *Hope* will grow up to a goodly ſtature; *Hope* will come to be as an *Anchor*, fixing very faſt, ſo as to keep the ſhip of the ſoul ſafe and ſecure, whatever the ſtorms and tempeſts are that may ariſe upon it. The more we know of Chriſt, the more ſhall our Hope be ſtrengthened in us: and one ſpecial reaſon why we hope no more with an unſhaken hope, is, becauſe we are not more in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. The Apoſtle, in 1 *Pet.* 1. ſpeaks concerning this bleſſed Hope that Believers are begotten to: and they are begotten to it, (he tells us) *by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead.* The more we are judicioully apprehenſive of Chriſt, of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, and of the Glory which he is advanc'd unto; the more will the hope of a Beleever be ſtrengthened in him. And that Scripture which I clos'd with the laſt day, it ſerves us to this very purpoſe, 1 *Pet.* 1. It's ſaid, that God the Father hath given Honour and Glory to his Son; that our Faith, and our Hope, might be in God.

And

And therefore must needs be inferr'd; that the more we know, and understand concerning Christ, and the Glory that he is now advanc'd unto; the more will there be of growth in the hope of a Beleever.

3. By growth in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; there will be a growth in godly Repentance. Repentance; there is such a thing, though it's little known, and less practised, according to the true Gospel-nature and state of it: But, such a thing there is, as Repentance towards God; a precious Grace, which God works in the hearts of his people; those that he hath a purpose to save. It is of necessary participation; and it is a Grace of necessary exercise: for our Saviour tells us, that *except we repent, we shall all perish*; there is a necessity of it; and yet alas, how many are meer strangers to it; know nothing of the Grace, know nothing of the Practice of it? And, how many of those that have any sense, or share in it; yet, that are very little in their Repentance, have but a very low measure and degree, know little of heart-meltings, and soul-breakings before God; much what strangers unto that sweet frame of spirit by which *Ephraim is set forth unto us*, as a blessed pattern and example, in *Jer.* 31. 18. where we have this account of him; *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised; as a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: Turn thou me, and I shall be turned: after that I was converted, I repented, and I smote upon my thigh.* This was *Ephraim*'s frame; and this is upon Record for our imitation. But alas, how little do we attain to of this Gospel-Repentance? how little do we expect hourly of such a

temper and frame of spirit? Can sin freely, but repent very hardly. How little doth there appear to God of any kindly workings, and breakings of heart before him, in the sense of all that we daily commit of sin and transgression, in a way of disobedience, and loose walking before the Lord. Why truly, I may be bold to say, that if so be there were any place for Repentance in Heaven, though indeed, it is not a place of Repentance, but of joy, and everlasting rejoycing. Yet, if Heaven were a place of Repentance, I am perswaded, that there are very few of those that come to Heaven, that would not fall upon the work and business there; and that, because they repented so little as they did while they were here on earth: if there were any place of repentance there, it would go to the hearts of many, that they did not take it more deeply into consideration, their evil dispositions, and sinful conversations, while they were in the World.

And, what is the reason that Repentance (that blessed Grace) is not more largely shared in; that it is not more expressed to the life of it: — why we may with much confidence conclude upon this, that this is one of the special reasons; because we have not more of the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For Brethren, if Christ, our Lord Jesus, were better known, and the knowledge of him better digested; I know this, that there would be more soul-meltings, and heart-breakings, in a kindly manner before God, than ever otherwise there's like to be. Consider what the Prophet speaks in *Zech.* 12. saith he, *They shall look upon him whom they have pierced*: and what then? *They shall look upon him*, they shall mind Christ, study

ſtudy Chriſt; they ſhall fix their ſerious thoughts upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and upon him, as *one whom they have pierced*: and what will follow? *Then ſhall they mourn over him, as one that mourneth for an only Son, and be in bitterneſs, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born.* This will raiſe up the ſorrow; this will break the heart. When perſons come for to know, and conſider, and ſeriouſly ponder upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſts conſideration of his dying, and dreadful ſufferings, and woeful breakings and bruiſings, that he was pleaſed to undergo on the behalf of poor ſinners; and then, their hearts will break within them. What was that which made the Converts in *Acts* 2. for to fall into ſuch a melting frame, and to be pricked at the heart, and to mourn and lament ſo deeply? Why, *Peter* had been preaching to them the Doctrine concerning our Lord Jeſus, and endeavouring to bring them to the knowledge of him whom they had crucified: You have crucified the Prince of Life; you have been the murtherers and betrayers of him: they were pricked to him at the heart, and cryed out: O, men and brethren, what ſhall we do? O miſerable wretches we! When a ſoul ſhall ſet it ſelf to know, and underſtand the myſtery concerning Chriſts, that the Eternal Son of God, he that was in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; he that was from all eternity, the delight of his Father; he that was holy, and unblamable, knew no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; the ſpotleſs Lamb: That he ſhould be hanged as a malefactor! that he ſhould be put to the greateſt ſhame and ignominy that could be! that he ſhould be under the heat of the wrath of his Father! that his precious

ous ſoul ſhould be in ſuch an agony, as that he ſhould be conſtrained to cry out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* That he ſhould undergo ſuch breakings, and bruiſings, and woundings! that he ſhould ſweat drops, and clods of blood! that his ſoul ſhould be exceeding ſorrowful and heavy, unto the very death! And yet this bleſſed Jeſus, one that never ſinned; no, not ſo much as in a *Thought*: yet, that all this ſhould be undergone by him! —— And, when a ſoul ſhall come to conſider, that it ſelf hath been acceſſary to this horrid murther! it ſelf ſhould have a hand in this bloody buſineſs! that it ſelf ſhould be a party to this prodigious impiety! that it ſelf ſhould ſtabb Chriſt to the very heart! when this comes to be conſidered; when a ſoul comes to be well improved in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and of his deep, and dreadful, and dolorous ſufferings; this muſt needs give an advance to the Grace of Repentance: Why, it would argue a heart harder than an Adamant, that would not, upon ſuch well digeſted apprehenſions as theſe, be in meltings before the Lord, upon the conſideration of a crucified Chriſt. This is that, which, if it were but well known, and ſtudied, and ſeriouſly pondered upon, would give an advance (I ſay) unto Repentance. But, the reaſon why we are no more in the lively practice of Repentance, is, becauſe we are no more ſtudied in this Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. I would this were conſidered of by us, and put to the proof, whether you would not find it ſo in experience, that this would make your hearts to break before the Lord.

4. The

4. The Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and a kindly growth in it; will conduce very much; as of Faith, and Hope, and Repentance; ſo of Love; love to God, and love to Chriſt, and love one to another. The complaint may juſtly enough be taken up concerning this, as concerning the other Graces: we are little in one and other; and truly, it is not to be expected, that they ſhould be much advanc'd in Love, that are not advanc'd in Faith, and Hope, and in their Repentance towards God. But thus it is; alas, that Love that ſhould be in us in the *flame*, it is moſtly but in the *ſpark*: we have ſome little glowings it may be, but not thoſe kindly burnings of Love to God, and Love to Chriſt; thoſe inlargements of heart that we ſhould make diſcovery of: — and what's the reaſon? Why, we may reckon it very much to this, that we are not more improved in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; For the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Chriſt, well advanc'd, well grown, and improved, as a moſt ſtrong and effectual conducement to the growth in Love. When the Daughters of *Jeruſalem* had been well inſtructed concerning the Spouſes Beloved, when they had had an account of him, their hearts were exceedingly taken with him, and then they would ſeek him with her: *Whither is thy Beloved gone; O thou faireſt among women? Whither is thy Beloved gone, that we may ſeek him with thee?* Thus it is, if ſo be that we knew more of Chriſt, we would be more in the Love of Chriſt. Truly, the motions of the Will, they will anſwer the ſanctified light of the underſtanding. Now, where there is but little light

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and Knowledge, 'tis not to be expected that there should be very much heat. Did we but know more of Christ,

1. First, of the loveliness of Christ, what an amiable person he is. Did we but throughly know what a lovely Christ he is, according to the account that's given of him in the *Canticles*, *He is the chiefest of ten thousand, altogether lovely*: Take him all over, you will see nothing but loveliness in the Lord Jesus Christ; he is lovely for his Name, for his Wisdom and Grace, all those incomparable excellencies that discover themselves in him; consider but of that; O he is the most lovely Person that ever was in the World, that ever visibly conversed with the sons of men.

2. Consider him in his loveliness, so in his lovingness (I distinguish so) his loveliness; the loveliness of his Person, and the lovingness of his Person; the most loving Christ, of the most loving disposition that ever was in the World, never any to be compared to Christ for Love; as full of love to poor souls as ever his heart could hold, next to the love that he bare from all Eternity to his Father, and to the Spirit, who are co-essential, and co-equal, co-eternal with him; next to the love that he bears them, his love is set upon the sons of men; he takes delight in the habitable parts of the World, according to the account that's given of him, in *Prov.* 8. where Christ is set forth unto us under the term and notion of Wisdom; saith he, I was my Father's delight, and I came into the habitable parts of the World, and my delights were with the sons of men: He had his delights from all Eternity with the Father, and with the Spirit; and yet notwithstanding he was pleased to come out of the bosom of his Father,

then, and to take up his delights within the habitable parts of the World, and with the sons of men? And what a condition did he find them in? A company of ill-looking and unlovely creatures, as ever eye could behold. I saw thee when thou wast in thy blood, cast out, to the loathing of thy person; and yet that time was the time of love: I loved thee, and I gave a demonstration of it, by doing so and so, according to what is expresst, *Ezek.* 16. Why thus it is. — *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, his only beloved Son. — God the Son, he so loved the world, that he gave himself for a wicked damned world; a company of wretches that had no love to him, yet he loves them; and he was out of love to them, willing for to lay down his life for them. And *greater love hath no man*, as our Saviour speaks in the Gospel, *than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.* For his *Friend*, I, but what a love was this then, That one should come and lay down his life for those that were *Enemies*? When we were enemies we were reconciled, and when we had no strength, Christ came and shed his blood; and that by the shedding of his blood, he might wash away the guilt of his Peoples iniquities. What a love was this? O well might the Apostle fall upon admirings of it, in *Eph.* 3. he prayes that they might comprehend the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths; and that they might know the love of Christ, which, saith he, *passeth knowledge*. Weigh these things Brethren, and let them not pass away in a slight manner, *That* (saith he) *you might know the heights*. Why there are heights, and depths, and breadths, and lengths in the love of Christ; and it is such a love as *passeth knowledge*, when we have known all we can of it,

yet it will transcend our knowledge; why such a love Christ hath impreſt. Now conſider; O, the the love of Christ to poor ſinners, that he ſhould ſtick at nothing to do for them, to ſuffer for them, to forego for them, to undergo for them: When the buſineſs was under conſideration, concerning the Redemption of the World; when it was propounded to him, My Son, wilt thou undertake for a damned World, to ſave a company of poor ſouls, that are like to periſh eternally, unleſs that help come in? Wilt thou undertake for them? Father, I will do it; I love them, and I will do them all the good I can. — I, but Son, If thou wilt undertake their cauſe, thou muſt bear their guilt, thou muſt undergo their *curſe*, thou muſt be put to *ſhame* for *them*, thou muſt ſuffer and dye, and ſhed thy blood for them. — Father, I am willing; Father, I delight to do thy Will; thy Law, O Father, is in my heart. — Why what a heart-breaking love is this? He ſticks at nothing, he doth not ingage to a diſpute with the Father, and with the Spirit, and ſay thus: Why ſhould I undergo this ſmart, and pain, and torment, for a company of wretches: Let them damn and periſh, let them reap the fruit of their own evil doings: Father, what haſt thou to object againſt me? I never offended thee; Why ſhould I be made an Offering and a Sacrifice for ſin? — Not a word of this, but a moſt willing complyance with the Counſel of God, concerning the ſaving of poor ſouls, and redeeming them from going down into the pit. What love was here? O admirable love of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt! — Why now do but conſider this then; This love of Chriſt, this Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the lovelineſs of his Perſon, and the lovingneſs of his nature and diſpoſition;

and

and what an inlarged heart of love, as to God, ſo to poor ſinners. — And conſider, what delight he takes to manifeſt his Love to us, and what longings there are in him, that he might have all his People in Heaven, that they might know to the full, that dear love that he hath born to them from all Eternity. Why? If theſe things were better known and digeſted, if we would not only ſlip and away, but dwell upon the Meditation of theſe things, unqueſtionably it would contribute moſt largely unto the promoting of love, we ſhould not be ſo dead-hearted unto Chriſt as we are; our fire of love would burn out more unto God, unto Chriſt, than ever it's like to do, if ſo be that we were but more improved in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. — I commend theſe things with much confidence, to the Conſciences of every one of you, whether that this Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, this bleſſed Knowledge, if it were but more purſued, and if we had but more advancement in it, whether it would not more improve our *Faith*, improve our *Hope*, improve our *Repentance*, improve our *Love* to God, and the Lord Jeſus, and of one to another.

And then again, The like we may ſpeak concerning humility and meekneſs of Spirit; for it comes to my thoughts, that Proverb of *Solomon*, to make uſe of it here, upon occaſion of this account that I give, concerning the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Solomon* ſpeaks of a gift of Knowledge, which proſpers which way ſoever it turns. Truly, ſo is this gift of Knowledge, where it's given of ſpecial Grace, when it is not a *notional* Knowledge, but a *heart* Knowledge, for ſuch a Knowledge I ſpeak of, ſuch a Knowledge as the Cove-

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ſhaft of God's Grace makes a conveyance of: For alas, I and others may preach a great deal of light into your heads, and you may come to have the notions of theſe things, and be never the nearer; but we ſpeak of a *heart*-Knowledge of God in Chriſt Jeſus, according to what the Covenant makes conveyance of (as I ſaid.) And I ſay thus; That where there is heart knowledge given, it is ſuch a gift as proſpers which way ſoever it turns. O the bleſſed benefit that comes over by the heart-knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, eſpecially when there comes to be a due improvement of it; as in the other reſpects, ſo in reſpect of meekneſs, & humility of ſpirit. Alas, meekneſs and humility, it's a lovely Grace; but where doth it appear? we are lofty, and are far from a diſpoſition that way, which ſhould diſcover it ſelf. What's the reaſon? — Becauſe of a defect in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. For thus: Had we but more of the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, there would not be that frowardneſs, and perverſneſs, and untowardneſs, and ſwelling of heart that commonly diſcovers it ſelf, if we had but a well improved, and a well digeſted Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus. For conſider: — What is there to be known of Chriſt? — Why, he is another manner of Chriſt than we take him to be, than we know him to be, or have a mind to know: we do not know what a Chriſt he is, he is another manner of Chriſt than you think he was: He was not a proud Chriſt, he was not a lofty ſpirited Chriſt; he was meek, and gentle, and lovely, and of a moſt humble frame, of a moſt graciouſly condeſcending ſpirit: *Learn of me* (ſaith he) *Mat.* 11. *I am meek, and lowly*: And he gave moſt convincing proof and demonſtration of it all along, in his courſe and converſation in the World.

World. Did we but know this, and had but a more through knowledge of what a kind of Christ he is; it would conduce to the meekning and humbling of our hearts and spirits, and make us to argue thus: What a meek and humble Christ, and I a proud swelling-hearted Wretch; — why, how will this consist with my Profession? I profess the Name of the Lord Jesus, and discover little or nothing of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus. Surely Brethren, this would conduce much to the meekning and humbling of our hearts.

And so for *Patience*, That's another Grace, which we should not only have, but have it in the increases and the improvements of it; and yet how little discovers it self; how proud, and passionate, and waspish, and froward are we? — What's the reason of this? — Because we know no more of Christ, we have not this heart-knowledge of Christ, to such a degree as we should press after. Did we but know what a patient Christ he is: O! when he was reviled, he reviled not again; and when he was reproached he bore it patiently; and he was led as a Lamb before the Shearer, dumb, and opened not his mouth. Why, did we but advance more in the heavenly knowledge of our Lord Jesus, it would conduce very much to the working of our hearts to patience, and to a good degree of Patience. This Knowledge of our Lord Jesus, it would influence the Grace of Patience, that we should be more conformable to Christ. And the Apostle, in *Heb.* 12. he propounds this very consideration in order thereunto: (saith he,) *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us*: And that we may do so, *Let us look unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our Faith; who for the joy that was set before him indured the Cross, & despised the*

shame:

shame: He indured the contradiction of sinners against him; *Lest* (saith he) *you be wearied and faint in your minds.* Look to this Jesus, know the temper of his Spirit, and what a patient Christ he was, and what a heavenly Spirit he discovered: And so I say, That the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus would contribute most strongly to such a purpose.

7. And so for *Heavenly-mindedness.* What's the reason that we are so apt to dote upon the World, and upon these lying and vexing vanities here below? —Why, because we know no more of Christ: If we were but more advanced in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we should be much helped against earthly-mindedness, and improve more in a heavenly frame of heart, and live above the World. Why, do not you know what a Christ he was? what a heavenly Spirit he had? how he lived in the World as a stranger? He set not his heart upon this and that pleasure and profit, but minded his business; and he had an eye to the glory that was to be revealed, and so he made it his great design, that he might improve his time, and honour his Father: And he was at length able to give this account, *Joh.* 17. *Father, I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.* And now further, *Glorifie me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* Father, I have liv'd in the World, not so much by choice, as upon the account of Duty; and my heart is with thee, and my longing's after Heaven: Father, glorifie me with thy self, and bring me to thy Glory; and thus Christ's heart was carried out. Now, had we but a well improved Knowledge of this, it would contribute much to the promoting of a heavenly mind in us, and make us to think with

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our ſelves, Do I know this to have been the gracious frame and ſpirit of my Lord Jeſus, whom I make a Profeſſion of? And doth it not concern me to endeavour conformity to him, that I may expreſs the like heavenly-mindedneſs that Jeſus Chriſt did? — I might yet ſpeak of other Graces: As,

8. **Fear** and Reverence of God. It's a pretious Grace, which receives much increaſe by a well improved **Knowledge** of Jeſus Chriſt. Let me but give an inſtance of that, in *Pſal.* 2. where there is an account given of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, That God the Father hath ſet his Son upon his holy hill of *Sion*; That he hath given the Heathen for his inheritance, the uttmoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion; That he hath given him a rod of iron, with which he will break in pieces his rebellious enemies, like a Potters veſſel. This is the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. This Knowledge, when perſons come to be well advanced in, and there comes to be a due improvement of it, will contribute very largely to the promoting of a holy Fear and Reverence of God, according to that which follows; *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the earth, ſerve the Lord with fear; rejoyce ye with trembling, Kiſs the Son.* Kings, and Princes, and great Men, are very apt to forget themſelves; as if ſo be that there were none above them, as if ſo be there were none to check and controul them. You know how *Pharaoh* carryed himſelf; *Who is the Lord?* Ah! but there is a Lord above all Lords, there is a King above all Kings, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom God hath ſet to be King upon his holy hill of *Sion.* And the right Knowledge of Chriſt, the well improved

proved and advanced Knowledge of Christ, it will promote a holy fear, and awe, and reverence of him, and of the great God, who hath constituted and appointed him Lord and King. I might speak largely to this Particular, but I'll pass it by. Thus I have endeavoured to make it appear to you in these Particulars, How the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus, well improved, how it doth contribute to a growth in Grace.

I would now tell you this further, That the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is such a Knowledge as is most beneficial to us, in respect of Gospel-Duties and Services, and doth contribute very much to the lively management of them: And therefore, it may well be required of Christians and Believers, that they grow in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that upon this very account, because I say, that the more we know of our Lord Jesus Christ, the more shall we advance in the lively performance of Gospel-worships, and Duties, and Services, which the Lord requires of us. Alas, Brethren, it is that which may well be matter of shame and mourning, to think how low we are; as in Graces, so in gracious Performances, and in holy Services. What's the account that is to be given of our daily Services that we perform, Sabbath-worships and Duties? Alas, what kind of Sabbaths do we keep? and what kind of Prayers do we perform and offer up to God? what kind of Worships are they that we present before the Lord? O! if we would but take an account of our selves, we might see cause enough to fall a weeping over every Duty we perform: When we come to attend the Ministry of the Word, and to do our Service to God, it appears by mens carriages, what a loftiness of spirit

there

there is, an unfixedness of spirit on God, and there is not the breathing after the enjoyments of God in the way of his Ordinances. — And so for Prayer, and other Services: What may be the reason of this? We may well reckon upon this, It is because we are not more advanc'd in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we have not that Knowledge so duly improved as it should be, concerning our Lord Jesus. For, Brethren, this is true that we should know concerning Christ, That his heart was upon his Work and business; and when he prayed, he prayed as one that was in Heaven! And, O, what wrestlings of spirit was there on his part with God! He prayed most earnestly, and, O how intent upon the Duty of Prayer, when he had to do that, and when he was to Preach! O with what intention of soul was that Service performed! And when he had the last Passover to keep, O with desire have I desired to keep this Passover, O Father, it is meat and drink to me to do thy will. Thus it was with Christ. Now, if we had a well-digested Knowledge of this, it would make us ashamed of ourselves, and make us put on with more activity and vigour of spirit, thinking with our selves, what a pattern we have in Christ.

And then, if we did but consider, That Christ is the great High-priest of our holy Profession, and that he hath engaged himself on the behalf of his People, both to procure their acceptance, and to vouchsafe them assistance. Now, consider but this; And these things we ought to know concerning Jesus our Lord, That it is his undertaking to procure acceptance, and to give assistance; for now he hath all power in his hands, The power of the Spirit, to give strength to his People, to inable them to make

their

their prayers and supplications, and to perform their Worships and Services; I will strengthen thee, I will help thee, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness; my Grace is sufficient for thee. Thus Christ hath signified concerning himself, for the comfort and incouragement of his People.

And then withal, this is to be known concerning our Lord Jesus, That he appears in Heaven before his Father, to promote their acceptance, and to plead their Cause; and (as the High-priest) to present their Services, and to sprinkle them with his own blood, and to desire the Fathers acceptance of them. Now, if this were but duly known concerning Christ, and we had but a well improved and digested Knowledge concerning this, that now I give you an account of, O, how much would it conduce to the quickning up our hearts to a lively performance of our Services, when we shall consider what an example we have in Christ, of Duty and Service to God; And then, that he hath undertaken to afford assistance, and to procure acceptance; this would make us go on with more life and vigour in the wayes of Godliness.

And then, I would have told you farther, That there is all the reason in the world Christians should endeavour a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, Because, as this Knowledge well improved, conduces to a judiciousness, and to a well ordering of the Conscience, and to the increase of all the Graces, and to the promoting of our Duty: so by a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jesus, we shall come to have the more kindly relish of Gospel-priviledges, and suck the sweet of them, and come

come to know what there is of comfort and soul-rejoycing to be found in these Priviledges.

And then, this Knowledge well improved, O how will it conduce to bear afflictions, to the incountering temptations, and inable the Soul to the well ordering of a Gospel-conversation, to the glory of God.

SERM. XIV.

I Shall pass by what was the last Day hinted to you, only now suggest some few Particulars more; which, if we were but acquainted with the Knowledge of, we should quit our selves better than we do, in this Gospel-worship and service of Prayer.

As now, Did we but know, and seriously ponder upon this, That Christ himself was very much in this Service, that he was a constant practiser, to his very Death, of this Duty of Prayer: If this were but well considered, that Christ was very much given to prayer; and if he could not have opportunities in the day time, he would fetch it out in the night, and be in the night season pouring out his soul before his Father. Thus it was with Christ, he was given to Prayer, and his last breathings were breathings in a way of prayer, into his Father's bosom.

And then consider this; this is that that is to be known concerning our Lord Jesus, That he hath had a deep experience of prayer, and of the difficulties of it, and temptations which the soul is subject to meet withal in the management of prayer; all this is known to Christ: So far as a holy nature [illegible] personal experience of such difficulties and such temptations, so far hath our Lord Jesus, in his own person, experimented this matter concerning prayer. Now, the knowledge of this, the well digested knowledge of this, That Christ was a man of prayer, and that he hath had experience

of

of prayer, and knows what there is of difficulty in prayer, and what ſore temptations hang upon prayer, and what a deſperate enemy the Devil is to prayer; he knows all this, and he hath a ſenſe upon his heart, and a knowledge of all the ſtruggling and wreſtling in the hearts and ſpirits of his praying People here upon earth. This is that that is to be known concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; he hath a deep ſenſe of all the ſtrugglings and wreſtlings of the ſpirits of his People here on earth, and is perfectly knowing of all the oppoſition which they meet withal in the way of prayer and ſupplication, and how the Devil doth ſet himſelf againſt his Saints, and what incounters they meet withal from unbelief, and the corruptions that are within, how apt to fall under deep diſcouragement and deſpondency of ſpirit: He knows all this, and to this purpoſe, that he might pity and compaſſionate his People. O, this is that which is to be known concerning Jeſus Chriſt in Heaven, and even now he is in glory, that he hath a ſenſe of all this upon his ſpirit, and is privy to every prayer that his poor humble broken-hearted conflicting people do make up to God, and is at Gods right hand ingaged to ſtand their prayers in ſtead, and to promote the ſucceſs of them, and to take them from their hands, as the bleſſed high-prieſt of their profeſſion, and to perfume them in his golden Sencer, with his odours, the odours of his interceſſion. This is that that is to be known concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and, O how doth this knowledge well digeſted, a ſoul being well advanced in it, how will it find this Knowledge largely contributing to the promoting of this Duty? Do but weigh theſe things in your Conſciences, whether this [illegible] not be a very great

conducement, to the more lively managing of our prayers; and that we would not trifle with God, when we are exercised in such a Service.

And then again, for that noble Gospel-Service and Duty of Praise and Blessing of God; The more the soul doth improve and grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the more will there be of loveliness, and activity, and inlargedness for the management of that. Truly, Brethren, it is that which we have all cause to be deeply humbled for, That God blessed for ever hath not more large returns ~~for~~ from his People, of praise, and thanks, and blessing, for all that Grace that he hath made to appear unto them; O how little is it that is done to purpose in such a service! And what's the reason that we are not more lively to such a purpose? that our hearts are not more inlarged to God, in a way of blessing, and praising, and thanksgiving to him? We may well reckon it to this, That we are not more in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; for this Knowledge of Christ our Lord, and of the Mysteries concerning him, this is the Knowledge that will make the soul to be upon the wing, mounting up with all inlargements of thankfulness and praise unto God: The more the soul is taken up with the apprehensions of the Mysteries of the Gospel concerning the Lord Jesus, the more will it be in admirings of Grace, the more will it be in magnifyings of the God of all Grace.

Consider, This Knowledge, it is such Wine, as will make the lips of them that are asleep to speak; (to use that expression which we have in *Cant.* 7. he speaks there concerning our Saviour) that is so generous, and spiritful, that it would make the lips of them

them that are aſleep to ſpeak. Oh! The Doctrine concerning our Lord Jeſus, if it were better known, it would ſpirit the ſoul, and make it to be moſt active to ſuch a purpoſe. You here have an account concerning the Angels: There was upon the birth of Chriſt, an heavenly Hoſte, and they were ſinging praiſes unto God, *Glory be to God on high.* — Upon what account? — upon the account of Jeſus Chriſt, and the knowledge they had of Jeſus Chriſt, and of that glorious Myſterie concerning Jeſus Chriſt; the Angels were not able to contain themſelves. The Virgin *Mary*, in *Luk.* 2. when ſhe comes to have an account of the Myſterie concerning her Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Grace of God through him: How doth ſhe break out with all inlargement, *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord; my ſpirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour*; and ſo all along. O what bleſſing and praiſing of God was there, on the part of a People that were well inſtructed in the firſt eſtabliſhing Apoſtolical conſtitutions! O what inlargements were there in praiſing God, and magnifying him! — And why? — Upon the account of the Knowledge that they had of the glorious Myſterie concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the account that was given in the primitive Perſecutions, concerning the Chriſtians, That they would be in their early ſingings and praiſings of God. This was the account of the Chriſtians, under dreadful perſecution, in the dayes of *Trajan* the Emperor, That they would be early in the morning, ſinging, and praiſing, and bleſſing God. — And upon what account? — Upon the account of this great and glorious Myſterie, concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. O! this is that that would fill the mouth with Arguments, and it would wiſely contribute to the

promoting of ability ſutable to ſuch Arguments, wherein to inlarge in bleſſing and praiſing God, our hearts would not lye ſo dead upon us; we would be more lively than we are in exalting God, magnifying his Name, did we but know more of our Lord Jeſus, of the Myſterie which hath been kept ſecret from Ages and Generations: but becauſe we do but ſip of the Cup, have a little ſmattering Knowledge, and no well digeſted Knowledge, and not duly improved, we come off ſo poorly as we do. O conſider the ſpirit of the Apoſtle *Paul*, how excellently it diſcovers it ſelf; as in the beginning of his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; bleſſed be God that hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt*: *In Chriſt*; So the Apoſtle *Peter*; O *bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that hath begotten us unto a lively hope, of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*; and all *by the reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Thus the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, O it will ſpirit the ſoul, and make it lively to the uttermoſt, in publiſhing the praiſes of the moſt high God. — I inſtance only in *Eph.* 3. what the Apoſtle is praying on their behalf, That *they might be able to comprehend with all Saints, the height, and depth, and breadth, and length, and know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge; ſo that you may be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* — And then mark what follows: *Now*, ſaith he, *unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we aſk or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto him be glory in the Church by Chriſt Jeſus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.* *Paul* could not hold, his ſpirit was ſo full; he was like a veſſe

veſſel, that muſt either have a vent, or burſt it ſelf: O, he being upon the meditation of this glorious Myſterie concerning Chriſt, and the Doctrine of Chriſt; why, ſaith he, *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly*: O how his heart was filled with praiſes and admirings of God upon the account of Chriſt.

And there is one thing more now comes to mind, wherein you may ſee the ſpirit of a Saint in the proper frame of it; when there comes to be a due improvement of the Knowledge of Chriſt: when the Apoſtle *Paul*, in 1 *Tim.* 1. had been making mention of the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and comes to expreſs his knowledge, and ſenſe of that Grace, according to what you have expreſt, and held forth in that Chapter: ſaith he, *The Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with Faith and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus*; and ſo he goes on, *This is a Faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation; that Jeſus Chriſt came into the World to ſave ſinners, of whom I am chief: howbeit, for this cauſe I obtained mercy, that in me firſt, Jeſus Chriſt might ſhew forth all long ſuffering, for a pattern to them which ſhould hereafter believe on him to everlaſting life.* *Paul* had been thus upon the ſerious meditation of this knowledge concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Mark you now what his ſpirit riſes up unto, in the cloſe of the Chapter: *Now*, ſaith he, *unto the King eternal*, having but made mention of Chriſt, and ſpoken ſomething concerning Chriſt, and given ſome account of his knowledge of the myſtery concerning Chriſt: Mark how he breaks out into this acknowledgment; *Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Inviſible, the only wiſe God, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever, Amen*; and this comes

in only occaſionally, in the way of a digreſſion: For he intermits the proſecution of the Argument he had in hand, and falls upon this by way of a digreſſion; as if he ſhould ſay; O, I cannot fall upon the mention of our Lord Jeſus, and of the myſtery concerning him; I cannot be upon the meditation of that knowledge which is to be had of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord; but (ſaith he) my heart muſt be breathing out in a way of praiſe and bleſſing of God, admiring the riches of his Grace.—And thus would it be Brethren, if we were but ſet to it, to advance in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: O, it would inlarge our hearts, as unto prayer, ſo unto thankſgiving, and bleſſing of God.

I add yet further; O, this knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, it is a knowledge that Chriſtians ſhould endeavour to grow and advance in; for it is by great growth in this, they will come to be the more happily accompliſhed for the performing of the ſervice of *Preaching*, and Hearing: I joyn theſe two together; Preaching, and Hearing of the Word of God. And you may conſider, how a well-improved knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, would conduce moſt ſtrongly to the provoking both of miniſterial Preaching, and likewiſe of Chriſtian Hearing, and attending upon the Doctrine which is to be made known unto us, according to the Commandment of the Everlaſting God.

For Preaching work; O conſider now, that the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, that knowledge that is to be had of him, well advanc'd, and improved, will contribute exceedingly to the moſt lively management of this ſervice.

Alas,

Alas, it's accounted in the World but a low-ſervice, and many times, with too much lowneſs of ſpirit, performed by thoſe that profeſs to be called to the performance of it. O, but whence is it, but from the want of a well-grown knowledge of our Lord and Saviour: For conſider Brethren, this is that that we are to know concerning our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; that the Word and Goſpel, which is the ſubject matter of our Preaching, and your Hearing, (I joyn theſe two together, *Preaching*-work, and *Hearing*-work:) Now the word, which is the ſubject matter of a Miniſters Preaching, and of a Beeleevers Hearing: This word, it comes out of the very heart of God, out of the bleſſed boſome of the Eternal God. And as a precious token of that love and reſpect that he bears to his Son, he hath given out this word out of his own breaſt and boſome; he hath given it, and committed it as a truſt unto his Son. (Will you conſider this,) That this everlaſting Goſpel, this word of Salvation, which is the ſubject matter of our Preaching, and your Hearing; it is given as a teſtimony of the Fathers Love; *it is given to Chriſt*: obſerve that expreſſion in *Joh.* 17. in the Prayer that our Saviour makes unto his Father; ſaith he, *ver.* 8. I have given unto them the words *which thou gaveſt unto me*: thou gaveſt the words to me firſt, and then, ſaith Chriſt, I have given theſe words unto them: our Lord profeſſeth, before all the World he makes this open profeſſion; ſaith he, *my Doctrine is not mine*: 'Tis not mine, conſidered as Mediator; but it is the Doctrine of my Father, which my Father hath given me, and which he hath intruſted me with, to make known unto the World,

and

and to communicate to my Diſciples; that by them the World may have the Knowledge of him: Conſider this, that God the Father, the Great *Jehovah*, He gives this Word, this Doctrine, unto his Son Jeſus Chriſt. Well, this is that that is to be known concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; that the Words and Doctrine, is that which is given as a gift by the Father unto him: and ſo likewiſe you have it, in *Rev.* 1. *the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*; — how came it to be his? Conſider that; it's reſolved thus, *which God gave unto him*, to ſhew unto his Servants, which muſt ſhortly come to paſs: and then he ſent, and ſignifyed by his Angel unto his ſervant *John*: — I, but Chriſt hath a Revelation; who gave it him? *God gives it him:* God hath given Chriſt all the whole plat-form, and frame of Doctrine that concerns the Church of God, his elect ones, and called ones, from the beginning unto the end of the World; God the Father hath given this to the Son.

2. This is that that is to be known concerning Chriſt; that this Word and Myſtery which is given of the Father to Chriſt, his ear hath been opened to liſten to it, moſt attent upon it; according to that expreſſion, in *Pſal.* 40. *Sacrifice and Offerings thou would'ſt not*: Chriſt's ear was not much attent upon that, Sacrifice and offerings thou would'ſt not; *But mine ear haſt thou opened*: Thou haſt opened mine ear to another Doctrine, to another Word, which concerns the ſalvation of ſouls, by a ſacrifice that muſt be offered up by me: this mine ear is open to. And ſo you have it, in *Iſa.* 50. The Prophet there ſpeaks in the perſon of Chriſt; he wakeneth morning by morning, and (ſaith he) *he wakeneth mine ear to hear*, as the Learned; *The Lord*

Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious: The Father gives the word, delivers it him; and the ear of the Son, our Mediator, is open to him.

3. You are to know concerning Chriſt, that this Word and Doctrine, which is the ſubject matter of our Preaching, and your Hearing, as it is given to Chriſt by the Father, and as his ear is open to it, ſo it comes with all delight and complacency into his heart; as you ſhall find in *Pſal.* 40. Firſt he ſaith, *Thou haſt opened mine ear*, and not only ſo, Thou haſt *bored* mine ear; and not only ſo, but, O Father, *thy Law is in mine heart*, and *I delight to do thy will*: O, this word that thou haſt given me, it's the joy of my heart, it's the rejoycing of my ſoul, that there ſhould be the contrivance of ſuch a word given to me, and intruſted with me; mine ear hears it as a moſt melodious ſound; my heart entertains it; O my God, thy *Law* is in my heart: O, its the joy and rejoycing of my heart, to think that ever thou ſhould'ſt truſt me with ſuch a Doctrine as this.

4. Conſider that this word, the Word and Doctrine of the Father, thus given to Chriſt, unto which his ear was opened, and to which his heart gave ſuch joyful entertainment to; This Word and Doctrine; Chriſt, he comes to be commiſſioned from the Father to Preach, and to make it known: He hath not only an ear to hear it, and a heart to imbrace it, but he muſt have likewiſe a mouth opened to publiſh and proclaim it; and this he is commiſſioned to. This is to be known concerning our Lord Jeſus, that he is commiſſioned of God, to make a ſolemn publication and promulgation of this Word, that it may be made known

known to the World. And therefore you have it, in *Isa.* 50. The Lord hath given me, not only to hear as the Learned, but to ſpeak as the Learned. Firſt, he hath the *ear* of the Learned to hearken to it; and then it's expreſt, that he hath the *tongue* of the Learned, that he may be able to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to a weary ſoul. This is the commiſſion that God hath given him, that he ſhould Preach, and make this everlaſting Goſpel, this word that comes out of the Father, that he ſhould make it known to the World: and the truth is Brethren, this that I ſay, is of a truth to be known, and acknowledged of us:- That Preaching work, the Preaching of the everlaſting Goſpel, and word of Reconciliation, it is more Chriſts work than the work of any man in the World. True it is, the baſe, beggerly World, and the imbaſed ſpirits of the people in the World; they look upon Preaching-work, as a poor, low, mean ſervice; and look upon thoſe that are imployed about it, as perſons that are little to be regarded. And this is the good entertainment that the Miniſters of Chriſt, and of the Goſpel, have ever had in the World. Generally they look upon a Preacher, and upon a Preachers work, as a poor, low piece of ſervice; the perſon mean, and his imployment little to be regarded: I, but if matters were well known, this would be apprehended; that the preaching of the Word, is moſt properly the work of Chriſt himſelf; He that is the great Mediator, He that was in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; took upon him the form of a ſervant; and he was pleaſed to accept of a commiſſion from his Father, to be a Preacher; and to preach the everlaſting Goſpel. As ſoon as he had

ſut-

ſuffered, and was riſen again, he came and preached to the World, as he did to his Diſciples before his Reſurrection, and ſo likewiſe before his ſufferings. He came with commiſſion from the Father, to preach the Word which was given him out of the boſome of the Father: That Word, which is the ſubject matter of our Preaching, and your Hearing; it is the word which Jeſus Chriſt is ingaged to preach, and publiſh, and make known to the World: and I ſay again, it is more Chriſt's work, than it is the work of any man in the World: and thoſe that are called out to this ſervice, they are called out to the work of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

5. And then add this further; that this Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he hath that intereſt in the Father, which none in all the World hath beſides, to the purpoſe of fetching out whatſoever there is of further Myſtery, and of diſcovery to be made concerning the Counſel of God; the Word, the Doctrine, the Eternal Counſel, which lay hid in the breaſt and boſome of God from all Eternity: that Counſel, that Word, and Doctrine, which hath ſo much of luſtre in it; Chriſt hath this priviledge above all creatures in Heaven and Earth, above Angels, Saints glorified in Heaven, militant on Earth; Chriſt hath this priviledge above them all, to fetch out, out of the Fathers treaſury, that which no Angel, nor Saint in Heaven or Earth, hath the priviledge to meddle withal; Chriſt hath obtained this of the Father, he hath this intereſt in the heart of the Father, that he may with boldneſs come, and take out whatſoever there is of ſecret Counſel in the Fathers boſome, that concerns the Church of God to the end of the World; He may be bold to

come

come and challenge this as his priviledge; Father, if there be any ſecret yet undiſcovered to the World, I claim the priviledge to be acquainted with it, and to have the diſcovery of it, and to make it known unto the World. This is the priviledge belongs to Chriſt.

As now to give an Inſtance, in *Rev.* 5. where you find there mention made of a Book in the right hand of him that ſate on the Throne, a Book written within and without, and on the back-ſide ſealed with ſeven ſeals; a book full of Myſterie, but a cloſed book; nay, a ſealed book, nay, ſealed with ſeven ſeals: Hereupon the Proclamation is made with a loud voice by an Angel, *Who is worthy to open the book, and to looſe the ſeals thereof?* Here's a book full of Myſterie, and matters of high concernment to the Church of God, to the end of the World: Who is worthy in heaven or earth to take this book out of the right hand of him that ſits upon the Throne? The Proclamation is made, and the account is given. Thus, no man in heaven or earth, nor under the earth, was able to open the book, nor look thereon, not ſo much as to look upon it. This goes to the heart of *John*, a great Favourite of Chriſt, a dear Servant of God; he for his part is aſtoniſht at it, and falls a weeping bitterly, That there ſhould be none found worthy to open the book. — Mark what follows; — *One of the Elders ſaid unto me, weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of* Judah, *the root of* David *hath prevailed to open the book, and to looſe the ſeven ſeals thereof; and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that ſate upon the Throne.* He came and took the book: Here was the priviledge of Chriſt above Angels and glorified Saints, or any in heaven and earth; there was ſuch a part

of

of the counsel of God which was hid in his breast & bosom, that none durst venture upon for to make a search into. The Lion of the tribe of *Judah*, the Lord Jesus, the Lamb that was slain, he was worthy; and so they come with their acclamations afterwards; they fall down before the Lamb, having Harps and golden Vials, and they sing a new song, worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain; thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: And then they break out into magnifying and praising of God; *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; and the four beasts said, Amen: and the four and twenty Elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.* Why now this is to be known concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, he hath this priviledge to take the book out of the hand, to go into the bosom of the Father, to open the cabinet of the Fathers most secret counsel; he hath this priviledge above all creatures in heaven or in earth. This is to be known concerning Christ.

6. Yet further, This Word and Doctrine, which is the subject matter of our preaching, and your hearing; it is such a Doctrine as Christ is marvellously pleased with the wise judicious publication and preaching of it, and with the humble attention upon it; and therefore Christ is perfect, and he hath promised to be present to the end of the World in his Churches, and in his Congregations, and with his Ministry, and with his under Preachers: For as I said before, preaching work is principally his; Christ is the great Preacher, and all that are imployed in the work, they are but under him, and they do his work principally;

ly; he is preſent with them, obſervant of them; he hath promiſed to give his aſſiſtance to them, and to take knowledge of all diſcouragements that they meet with; as we ſee in the caſe of *Paul*: When *Paul* was upon his preaching vvork, he meets vvith very hard uſage; the Lord appears to him, and doth as it were clap him upon the ſhoulder, and ſaith, Be of good cheer *Paul*, Thou haſt teſtified of me here at *Jeruſalem*, and in ſuch and ſuch a place, I will ſtand by thee, and none ſhall hurt thee. O Chriſt is preſent with his ſervants, and he delights to ſee his work graciouſly and judiciouſly managed, and to ſee his People that attend upon him, to give heed to his Doctrine. The Lord Jeſus he takes Knowledge how his work is entertained, how its preached and heard, and how people behave themſelves under the diſpenſations of it. Why now, good now beloved, conſider this; Theſe things are the things that we are to know concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Now, if this were well conſidered, wold it not contribute exceedinly to the promoting of preaching and of hearing work? Thoſe that are called out to this miniſtration, O if they had but the well digeſted Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, would not this ſpirit them, and make them to look to the cauſe they manage? how they manage this truſt that is committed to them from Chriſt, and how they deal with this bleſſed Doctrine that came out of the boſom of the Father; and if you did but conſider, that you come to hear the Word that is given of the Father to Chriſt, which is in the heart of Chriſt, and which he ingages himſelf to give new life unto; and how he takes notice what entertainment his Word hath, &c. If you did but know this, certainly there would be

be other manner of hearing than ordinarily there is. Thus now I have ſpoken concerning that.

I ſhall now go on, and let you know, That by growing in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, Believers they come to be exceedingly advanced: As for the other Services that I have been ſpeaking of, as Goſpel-Duties, in Prayer and Praiſing God, in Preaching and Hearing the everlaſting Word, that came out of the boſom of the Father: So by the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, we come to be exceedingly advantaged for that great work of mortification, and of ſelf-denial. To joyn theſe two together, Self-mortifying work, — Self-denying work. Alas, Brethren, how hardly are we brought to theſe Services? And when we ſet upon them, alas, how aukward, and how untowardly do we apply to the management of it. — And why? Alas, becauſe we are ſo deficient in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; were there a well improved Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Did you but know what a ſelf-denying perſon he was, and how juſtly he may require ſelf-denying at the hands of his People: If we did but conſider that this Jeſus Chriſt, he was from Eternity, God with God; he might have lain warm in the boſom of his Father, in the dear and bleſſed boſom of his Father; he might have lain there and delitiated himſelf, and kept out of all the ſtorms and tempeſts of the World, and might have enjoyed himſelf with ſweeteſt delight in his Fathers boſom. O what a ſelf-denying Chriſt was here! That he ſhould come and leave his Father's boſom, and be content to expoſe himſelf to the difficulties and hardſhips of the World, to undergo ſtorms and tempeſts. Mark

what the Apoſtle ſpeaks, in *Rom.* 15. *Let every one of us pleaſe his neighbour*, &c. *For* (ſaith he) *even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf.* He did not ſet his heart upon pleaſing himſelf, but that he might pleaſe his God, and profit his People here below; *even Chriſt* (ſaith he) pleaſed not himſelf. O, a ſelf-denying Chriſt; and if this were well known, it would promote ſelf-denying work in us: — And then ſin-mortifying work; O, we are hardly brought to it, to wound and ſlay our corruptions, and to be ever and anon digging down our Walls, and ever and anon to be boring in the ſides of this or that corruption. This is his hard work to us; but had we but a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to know that ſin and corruption, it is one of the great enemies that he came into the World to encounter with, and to ſet it under his feet; — and he was manifeſted upon this account, according to that of the Apoſtle, in 1 *Joh.* 3. *For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil*: He was nail'd upon the Croſs, that he might have our old man crucified with him. Why if we had but a well digeſted Knowledge of theſe things, concerning our Lord Jeſus, it would facilitate the buſineſs, and make us fet upon it with activity and inlargement of ſoul.

And ſo for that great Goſpel-Service of reſiſting the Devil: That's another great work that's required of Believers. Now, if we had but a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, O how would it conduce to the lively management of that great ſervice, and make us not to be afraid to look all the powers of darkneſs in the face. Did we but know that our Lord Jeſus hath conquered the Devil,

Devil, the Prince of the World; he hath led him after as a ſlave, he hath the Devil in a chain, and all the powers of darkneſs at command: therefore, upon the knowledge of this, how reſolute may a Chriſtian be, to make oppoſition to the Prince and powers of darkneſs, knowing that the Lord Jeſus hath ſpoyled Principalities and Powers.

And then for that great Goſpel-Service, of yielding up in the ſubjection to our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, which is the thing that the world doth ſo much ſtick at, and make oppoſition to, and ſay, We will not have this man to rule over us: No, let us rather break his bonds aſunder, and caſt away his cords from us. Oh, but Brethren, this well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, it would facilitate this great Service, and make the heart free to come up to it, willing to give its neck to Chriſt, and to ſubject to his yoke and Government. When we ſhall come to know this concerning Chriſt, That God the Father hath anointed him, and ſet him as King upon his holy hill of *Sion*, and that there's a Kingdom appointed to him: and the day will come, when in deſpight of Princes, and Powers, and Rulers, and all the mighty ones in the World, though they combine themſelves together, yet God will give the Kingdom to his Son: The time will come, when the Kingdoms of the World ſhall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever. This is that that is to be known concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Lord ſhall rule and reign, and all his enemies ſhall be made his footſtool. Now, if this were well digeſted, it would make the heart to be free to yield up it ſelf to him: O, this is the King that I would yield ſubjection to; but not

in a way of rejecting of Kings and Governours: O, but Christ is my King, and God hath set him at his right hand, and all his enemies shall be made his footstool. Now I say, the well digested knowledge of these things, would contribute exceedingly to every Gospel-Duty; O, how would this Knowledge of Christ, be as oyle to the wheels, to make them run most swiftly and speedily in the wayes of God.

There are other things that I would have spoken to, to which I would fain have given a dispatch. Though indeed we are bucketting up out of a full Fountain, the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, O, it's the pretious Knowledge that our souls should be delighted to be acquainted with. O, how will it conduce to help in suffering and resisting of temptations, and afford comfort in all our priviledges.

As Justification, That's one of the great priviledges of the Gospel. Now, alas, we lose much of the comfort of it, by reason of our not being throughly acquainted with the Mysterie concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, because we have not a well improved Knowledge of Christ. O, did a soul but know this, That its Justification did depend upon the Justification of Christ; if he be justified, you shall be ~~such~~ to be justified; and if he be not justified, you will never be justified, your Justification will come to nothing. Now, the Knowledge of this, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, that he is perfectly justified, and according to a legal Justification. Here's the comfort of it, That Christ is justified with a legal justification; God according to the strictness of his Justice, hath given up a Justification of his Son, according to that expression,

Isa.

Isa. 50. *It is God that justifieth me*: And God justifies Christ with a legal Justification, and gives him a full acquittance; and gives this account of him, That *he hath fulfilled all righteousness*. Now, Believers Justification, which is of Grace, depends upon Christ's Justification, which is according to the Law, or of his having a Justification according to the Law, upon the account of his fulfilling of all righteousness. Now, if the soul comes to know this, That Christ is fully justified with a legal Justification, O how will this make a Believer to say with triumphing of soul, I know whom I have believed, I have believed on him who is justified with a legal Justification.

SERM. XV.

HAving in the close of the last Argument, begun to speak concerning Gospel-priviledges, and how much our growth in the Knowledge of Christ will promote the comfort of those Priviledges, I shall now proceed a little further with you in that Argument, in making it more fully clear to you: That as ever we desire to suck the sweet of Gospel-Priviledges, to have our souls refreshed with them, as with breasts of consolation, that we may find them to be as streams from *Lebanon*, as wine that's able to make the lips of them that are asleep to speak. It concerns us exceedingly for to endeavour and advance in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall never be able so fully, justly to value the Priviledges of the Gospel, nor so kindly to relish the comforts of these Priviledges, if we do not well understand the Mysterie concerning growth in Grace, and be well improved in the Knowledge of Christ.

I toucht a little upon that great benefit that comes over to us, of Justification: That great Priviledge; indeed such a benefit as is beyond all valuation. O that we would but make it our work and business to search into it, to labor that we may understand it, what is the proper interpretation of the Justification of a sinner; the Scriptures speak of it, and they invite us to be well studied in it; for a sinner, a guilty sinner, chargeable with a world of wickedness, lyable to a hell of wrath and vengeance, deserving to be everlastingly cursed of God, and to be cast under

under everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power: A poor guilty soul that hath been, it may be, for many, many years wallowing in filth and mire of sin, weltring in blood, and hath been soaking and rotting in his dung; such a poor creature that is laden with iniquities, and whose Conscience lies under deepest and most dreadful guilt; for such a poor creature, yet to have an eye of compassion opened upon him, a look of favour, and when he might justly have expected to hear this dreadful doom and sentence past upon him; thou art a guilty malefactor, thou hast committed high treason against the Crown and Dignity of the great God, and I judge thee to be suffering of the vengeance of eternal fire; I adjudge thee to be cast into prison, and to lye under chains, and to be everlastingly sweltring under the unsupportable weight of my wrath and indignation. Whereas a poor soul might justly expect to have such a sentence past upon it, yet for God to say, This poor soul that is guilty of so much Rebellion against me, I do freely forgive; and all the sins that were committed by him, from first to last, shall never be charged upon him; nothing of all that guilt that hath been contracted by him, shall be reckoned to him, but I will discharge him freely, and he shall have no more conscience of sin, he shall be as if he had never startled a tittle from the perfect rule of Righteousness: I will give him a full discharge, and he shall stand right in Court, and be able to make a challenge to men and devils, and say, Who shall lay any thing to my charge? It is God that justifies. O the pretiousness of this Gospel-priviledge! And it will be known one day, of what pretious import it is. Why this is Justification,

Gospel-Justification; for one that (I say) hath been plunged into the deepest gulf of guilt, to be fully acquitted of all; and there is nothing of all that ever hath been done by him, of wickedness and transgression, that shall be charged upon him, or reckoned unto him. Why now the comfort of this Priviledge it is exceedingly promoted by a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we do but consider.

First, That the Foundation of a poor sinners Justification, is laid in the Justification of Christ himself: For if he, who undertook on the behalf of sinners, had not been justified himself, never had any soul been justified, no not to the end of the World. The Justification of a sinner, it stands upon the foundation of the Justification of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was justified himself, and by his being justified, the sinner comes to be justified.

And his Justification, it is a legal Justification. The Justification of a sinner is an Evangelical, a Gospel-Justification; but the Justification of Jesus Christ it is a legal Justification, he is justified by works, he is justified by the Law, he hath fulfilled the Law, both in a way of doing, and in a way of suffering, both wayes: And so his Justification, it is a legal Justification; and in vertue of this Justification, a poor sinner comes to have his Justification, which is Evangelical. This is now the advantage that comes over to a soul by a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jesus; it may bear upon this, That it is and shall be for ever justified, because its Justification depends upon the Justification of Jesus Christ, whose Justification comes over to him in a legal way, and it's perfect and compleat, so that strictest Justice can take no exception against.

And

And then add this withal, that by the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the comfort of our Juſtification is exceedingly promoted, becauſe there is this to be reckoned to the knowledge of Chriſt, that he ſtands ingaged to ſee to it; that all thoſe, whoſe cauſe he hath undertaken, and in whoſe behalf he hath ingaged himſelf; it lies upon him to ſee to it, that their Juſtification do proceed, and that it be vindicated, and it be maintained to them: this is that that we have to know concerning Jeſus Chriſt, that it lies upon his hand to ſee to it; that all thoſe that he hath given himſelf for, may be fully and freely diſcharged, that there be nothing objected againſt them, nor may lye againſt them in Court: This is that which lyes upon the hand of Chriſt for to do; and to this very purpoſe it is, that he now being aſcended on high, and ſet down on the Right-hand of the Majeſty in Heaven: this is that which he now ingages to; He appears in Heaven before God, to this very purpoſe, that he might maintain the Juſtification of his people, his believing ones, that he may maintain it to them, and that they may have the comfort of it. Mark you how the Apoſtle reaſons to ſuch a purpoſe, *Rom.* 8. *ver.* 28, 29. ſaith he, *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect; it is God that Juſtifies, who ſhall condemn? it is Chriſt that died*: — I, but what of that, that he died; why, if ſo be that he be not riſen again, how can God be juſt in juſtifying? I, but ſaith he, *yea, rather that is riſen again*; he brings it in with a *yea rather*, *who is even at the Right-hand of God, and maketh Interceſſion for us*: This is a Beleevers plea, upon the account of Chriſts ingaging of himſelf, by *dying*, and *riſing*, and *interceding*, appearing to make inter-

ceſſion; this is the plea; Chriſt comes to ſtand forth before God, on the behalf of his beleeving ones, that their Juſtification may be maintained to them. And truly Brethren, were it not that the Covenant is ordered in all things, and ſure; and that the Mediator of the Covenant, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is thus ingaged with the Father, in the behalf of his Redeemed ones. Alas, what woful breakings would there be upon our comforts? I, and what indeed would become of our Juſtification? A juſtified ſoul repents, and comes to be pardoned, and is acquitted, and the poor ſoul turns again to folly, and renews his tranſgreſſion by performing new acts of diſobedience: what would become now of a ſoul in ſuch a caſe? you know how it was with *David*, and *Peter*, and other poor ſouls; they take a courſe being juſtified, to unjuſtifie themſelves, and for to blot out their pardon, caſting themſelves under new guilt: what would become of a poor creature in ſuch a caſe? Alas, I had indeed the forgiveneſs of all my ſins paſt; I, but I have been upon new tranſgreſſions, I have broken with God again; and what if God ſhould now break with me? I have pardoned thee formerly, but thou haſt forfeited thy pardon. I told you thus, ſinner, I will diſcharge thee of all thy ſins that ever were committed by thee; but look thou to it, I will ſpeak peace to thee, but turn thou no more to folly: ſo the Prophet ſpeaks in the *Pſalm*, and Chriſt to the man, *Thou art made whole*, I, but *go thy waies, and ſin no more*; look to it, that thou ſin more. — — I, but, ſaith the poor ſoul, alas, I have ſinn'd again, I have turned to folly, I have broke with God, and what will become of me now? Why here's now the comfort; Chriſt, he lives

lives for ever at God's Right-hand, and he is therefore able to ſave to the utmoſt, thoſe that come unto God by him, *Heb.* 7. becauſe he ever lives to make interceſſion: He pleads with the Father, why Father, my blood is freſh ſtill, I plead my blood ſtill; the merit of my blood: Father, I ſhed my blood, to ſatisfie thy Juſtice for all the ſins that ever were, or ever ſhould be committed. Father, this poor creature hath broke with thee; I, but my Father, I have not broke with thee; conſult my blood, thou wilt find, that that blood of mine hath made ſatisfaction for this, and that, and the other tranſgreſſion. Thus we are to conceive concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: and ſo a poor beleeving ſoul, knowing, and underſtanding the myſtery concerning Jeſus Chriſt, with a well-improved knowledge, may plead this, and apply ſtill to that blood, and bear upon the repreſentation which the Lord Jeſus makes of his blood and meritorious ſacrifice to the Father: plead this, and bear upon this, and ſo ſhall he come to be maintained in his juſtified eſtate. Truly Brethren, theſe are the greateſt things that ever God did make known to the World, and they are matters of the higheſt importance that poſſibly can be made known unto us, and therefore we have reaſon to conſider of them, and ſhould ſet our hearts to this, that we may come to have a more due apprehenſion of them: and ſo the Apoſtle argues moſt preciouſly, in 1 *Joh.* 2. when he had ſpoken before concerning the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, that it *cleanſeth from all ſin*, there's your Juſtification: why then, ſaith the Apoſtle, *my little children, Theſe things write I unto you, that you ſin not*: You have cleanſings by the blood of Jeſus, and free Juſtification from the guilt

guilt of all your tranſgreſſions: this is a bleſſed Doctrine, as if he ſhould ſay, and this is that which will fill up your joy, to think that there hath been ſuch a blood ſhed for you, as cleanſeth you from all your ſins. Why now it ſtands you upon to look to it, that you do not ſin againſt this blood, nor infer upon it, therefore we will be the more bold to ſin; no, God forbid it ſhould be ſo: therefore, ſaith he, *Theſe things write I unto you, that you ſin not*: O, but the poor creature may reply, and ſay, Alas, you write to us that we ſin not; but how can it be but that we ſin, carrying about with us ſuch a body of ſin; having ſuch curſed principles, lying open to ſo many temptations? How ſhall we be able to ſtand, and to keep up from being prevail'd upon by temptation, ſo, as not to be drawn to ſin: I, but then here's the relief; if it be the purpoſe and bent of your hearts not to ſin, but to walk ſuitably to the Grace of the Goſpel; why then take comfort in this, *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate.* If any man ſin, why we have *had* a ſacrifice; I, but that ſacrifice now ceaſeth to be offered: — ſo it doth, and Chriſt will never offer any more ſacrifice, he will never come upon the Croſs again; He will never ſhed blood more; He will never come into the World again to dye, as he did at firſt. The poor ſoul may argue thus; O, but alas, Chriſt will never ſuffer more; if we ſin, and break with God, what ſhall we do? I but, ſaith he, Though we have no more ſacrifice for ſin, no more ſacrificings; yet there is a *ſtanding Advocation*: there's the comfort, as the Apoſtle holds it out. —— But this is ſpoken to poor humble ſouls, whoſe purpoſe is not to ſin, and yet through infirmity, ſometimes they do miſcarry.

This

This is ſpoken only for the relief of thoſe, and not to imbolden any proud wretch in a way of wickedneſs. Why, if any man ſin, though we have no more ſacrifice; and indeed, bleſſed be God, and to the praiſe of Jeſus Chriſt be it ſpoken, there needs no more ſacrificing, he hath ſacrificed enough, he hath done that once for all, which is ſufficient for all; he hath done more by once ſhedding of blood, he hath done that that all the bloods that ever were ſhed from the beginning of the World, were never able to accompliſh: there is but *one ſacrifice*, I, but there is a *ſtanding Advocation*. This is the comfort, and this is that that maintains the Juſtification of Beleevers; I, it doth; it maintains the Juſtification of Beleevers, that there is a ſtanding Advocate, a ſtanding Interceſſion performed; and Chriſt ſtill is taking off, as the poor ſinner is drawing on: This now is the benefit that comes by a well-improved Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: but to paſs from that.

Conſider now what reaſon there is, that we ſhould endeavour a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Becauſe this Knowledge doth ſo ſtrongly contribute to the promoting of the comfort of the priviledge of Adoption; that's another great priviledge of the Goſpel. *Adoption*, truly this, as the former; and ſo all other priviledges of the Goſpel; alas, we are not affected with it as we ought to be. You would think it a great matter for a great Monarch, a mighty Potentate in the World, for to look upon a poor beggarly creature, a beggars child that's caſt out, and hath none to look after him; to take him up from the dunghill, from his beg-

beggarly, baſe, and ſordid condition; to take him up, and Adopt him for his ſon, and to Eſtate him in great Poſſeſſions, to ſettle him upon them, and to own him to ſuch a purpoſe. It was a great matter for *Pharaohs* Daughter to Adopt *Moſes* for her child: poor *Moſes*, whoſe Father and Mother durſt not keep him in their houſe; they turn'd him out, caſt him upon the River in a Basket of Bull-ruſhes; this courſe was taken with *Moſes*. *Pharaohs* Daughter ſhe ſpies the basket, and finds the Babe, and poor Babe, weeping with tears upon his face in that condition; and ſhe takes up this Babe, and looking upon it as a lovely child, ſhe adopts it; though in a periſhing condition, yet ſhe takes this child and adopts it for her own; this ſhall be my child. This now was a great matter, and a thing to be reckoned upon as a very high act of Grace. O, but what is this to that act of Grace, that the great Majeſty of heaven performs on the behalf of poor ſinful ſons and daughters of men? That he ſhould look upon them in their moſt loathſom condition and ſtate, and ſhould pleaſe to ſet his love upon them, theſe baſe born children, beggars brats (for ſo we are all) a ſeed of rebellion; they are a generation of men and women that come from a bitter root, they are ſuch as the ſoul of God might abhor; yet for the Lord's ſake, O theſe beggers brats, theſe contemptible creatures, theſe ill-looking deformed people, yet notwithſtanding I will ſet my love upon them, I will love them freely, I will adopt them for my children, and they ſhall be mine, and I will eſtate them in great and large Poſſeſſions, I will own them, I will not be aſhamed of them, to be called their Father, and to call them my children. A wonderful thing it is, to conſider of the privi-

ledge

ledge of Adoption. I, but now, by the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when it comes to be a well grown Knowledge, when we come to know that that is to be known concerning Jeſus Chriſt, this will exceedingly advance the comfort of this priviledge of Adoption: As will appear thus.

Firſt of all, We are to conſider that a Believers Adoption, it's founded in Chriſt; and the foundation of it, it is laid in the Blood, and Death, and Sacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt. We are ſaid to be the Sons of God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks: 'Tis by faith in Jeſus that we come to have this Adoption; and we are to know, that all that are the adopted of God, they are a generation that ſprings out of the very blood and bowels of Jeſus Chriſt. Methinks it is worthy obſerving, that which we have in *Iſa.* 53. compared with *Iſa.* 54. In the 53. you have an account in a Prophetical way, of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and of his blood ſheding. *It pleaſed the Father to bruiſe him*, v. 10. *He hath put him to grief.* Well, what follows upon this? *He ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied.* Now mark you, what's this travel? Obſerve what follows in Chap. 54. *Sing, O barren, thou that didſt not bear, break forth into ſinging, and cry aloud, thou that didſt not travel with child; for more are the children of the deſolate, than the children of the married Wife, ſaith the Lord: Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them ſtretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; ſpare not, lengthen thy cords, and ſtrengthen thy ſtakes; for thou ſhalt break forth on the right hand, and on the left, and thy ſeed ſhall inherit the Gentiles.* And thus the Prophet goes on. Here now upon the Sacrifice & Sufferings of our Lord Jeſus, there comes to ſpring up a numerous Iſſue, which ſprings up out of his blood;

blood; he ſhall ſee his ſeed, and be ſatisfied; there ſhall be a ſeed that ſhall be raiſed up out of his very blood and bowels. And ſo likewiſe in *Pſal.* 22. the Prophet having in the former part ſet forth unto us the ſufferings of Chriſt, he gives us in the cloſe of the *Pſalm*, an account of the fruit that ſprings up out of theſe ſufferings: Saith he, *A ſeed ſhall ſerve him, it ſhall be accounted to the Lord for a generation; they ſhall come and declare his righteouſneſs unto a people that ſhall be born, that he hath done this.* He hath brought about a ſeed, he hath raiſed up out of his own blood and bowels, a ſeed that ſhall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation. O, this is the benefit that comes by Chriſt. And mark you this, By the right Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, we have this comfort concerning Adoption, That as he pleads on the behalf of his People their Juſtification, and maintains them in that; ſo he pleads their Adoption, and his blood it is that keeps them faſt to God, ſo as they ſhall never be unchilded again.

And then again, This is that that we are to know concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, That it is he that gives them this priviledge of Adoption, and puts them into the actual poſſeſſion of it, as in that, 1 *Joh.* 12. *As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God.* He gave them the priviledge to become the Sons of God, and to enjoy this priviledge: Why this is that we are to know concerning our Lord Jeſus.

And with all conſider this, O, this is that which makes the comfort of Adoption to ſpring out, to flow forth to the refreſhing of the ſouls of the Saints, to think that their Adoption it is ſuch a priviledge, as that upon the account thereof, as they come for to be *Children* to the Father, ſo they come to be

Brethren

Brethren to Christ. For mark you, Christ himself is a Son; saith the Apostle, *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.* Here's love indeed; and it appears so to us, because by being made the Sons of God, we come to be in a condition like unto Christ? — For, what is he? He is the Son of the Father, he is the begotten of the Father, the *only* begotten, in regard as he is second person; and the *first begotten* in respect of his Mediatorship, as he is God-Man: The first born, the first begotten; the *only begotten* as he is the second Person; but the first begotten, and the first born as he is Mediator; as the Prophet speaks in the *Psalms*, *Thou art my Son, This day have I begotten thee.* You are to understand that of Christ as Mediator, and especially as raised up in the day of his Resurrection from the dead, *This day have I begotten thee*; begotten thee by an act of mighty power, raising thee up; and so he becomes the first-born among many Brethren Here's the comfort of the priviledge of Adoption, which we come to be partakers of, by a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: Here's the comfort of our Adoption, that by means hereof we come into a Brotherhood with Christ. Beleevers, O what a dignifying priviledge is this, that they come to have a Brotherhood with Jesus Christ! As they have a filiation in reference to God, so they come to have a Brotherhood with Jesus Christ; so that he is ~~born~~ Brother to them, and they are Brethren to him (according to *Psal.*22. we sung this Morning) *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren*, speaking of his People and redeemed ones; and he is pleased so to reckon upon all his People; they are his Brethren, *Go and tell my Brethren.* After his Resurrection

ction he expreſſeth himſelf to this purpoſe, *Go and tell my Brethren that I go before them.* And O, this is that that doth advance the Priviledge, and give them comfort of the priviledge of Adoption to ſouls, to think that they come into a Brotherhood with Chriſt Jeſus. And as it is ſaid in the Text I ſpoke to the other day, *That God is not aſhamed to be called the God of his People*; God is not aſhamed to be called their God, and their Father, and to call his People his *Children*: So it is ſaid of Chriſt, and 'tis a very conſiderable thing, that which the Apoſtle holds forth in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*; ſaith he, *Both he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one; for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them brethren.* Mark this, this is the teſtimony concerning Jeſus Chriſt, That as God is not aſhamed to call them children; truly this language may well aſtoniſh us, God the Father is not aſhamed to call his People, poor deſpicable *worms* as they are, he is not aſhamed to call them children, and to be called their God and Father: So our Lord Jeſus, is not aſhamed to call them Brethren; but is free to ſay, This is my Brother, and this is my Siſter; as you know what's expreſt in the Goſpel, when they came and told him, Thy Mother, and thy Brethren ſtand without deſiring to ſpeak with thee; — Why ſaith he, Who are they? you underſtand my Brethren according to the fleſh: O, but I'll tell you who are my Brethren, and whom I will never be aſhamed to own for Brethren and Siſters; He that heareth my Word, and receives my Doctrine, and comports with my Counſels, and attends me in the way of the Goſpel, That's my Brother, that's my Mother, and that's my Siſter; I will never be aſhamed of that Kindred. *He is not*

aſhamed

ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare my Name unto my brethren; in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee. (This refers unto *Psal.* 22. and it's a quotation out of that.) O wonder of Grace and Mercy! That there should be such a conjunction; I will not be ashamed to call them Brethren, I will declare thy Name to my Brethren, I will tell them what a Father they have; I know thee well, thou art my Father and my God; and I will tell them, and declare thy Name to them, and make it known to them what a Father I have, and have had from all Eternity; and I will tell them what a Father they shall find thee to be to them; And this I will tell to them, and sing praise to thee in the Church. O this will be the joy of my heart, that I have a company of poor Brethren. Christ was not prided in this, to be the only begotten of the Father; indeed he gloried in this, to be the only begotten, as second Person. O, but it was his joy to think that he should have a company of people that should come into the state of Brotherhood with him; O he joys in this, and shed his blood to purchase them; and when he comes once to have them given to him, he will say to them, Friends, you are my Brethren, flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone, we have one blood, and I will declare my Fathers Name to you, and it shall be my joy so to do; in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee. O, a wonder of Mercy and Grace! that ever it should be thus done to poor sinners; O, how will this advance the comfort of a Believers Adoption, when we shall come to consider, that by vertue of this Adoption, he comes to be in a Relation to God as to a Father, so to Christ as to a Brother. — A Brother, and what Brother? that so you

may come to understand the blessing of this Priviledge; and if it may be, that we may every one of us, that have any hope towards God, take shame to our selves, that we should be so spirited, and should not come to look more into Gospel-priviledges, the priviledge of Justification, and of Adoption; that we should not search into them, and have our hearts more affected with them. Now I say, that you may come to be the more affected with this, and to know how the comfort is advanc'd to us, consider what a Brother Christ is:

A Brother, not such a Brother as he in the Gospel, *Luk.* 15. when his younger Brother had plaid the Prodigal, and had spent his estate upon lewd persons, in a course of riotous living, he comes home and humbles himself to his Father, and confesseth; *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.* He comes home, and the Father entertains him, and falls upon his neck and kisseth him, and kills the fatted Calf, and provides the best robe for him, and calls his Friends together, *Let us rejoyce and make merry, This my Son was dead, and is alive, he was lost, and is found; and they began to be merry.* The elder Brother, he comes out of the field, and hears the musick, and these rejoycings, and he begins to take it in indignation, and his spirit begins to boyl within him, and he begins to grumble at it; O Father (saith he) I am thy elder Son, and I have carried it thus and thus to thee, and thou never didst thus to me. Here was a Brother, but a Brother of somewhat an unbrotherly spirit, towards his repenting and returning Brother. Is Christ such a Brother? An elder Brother, but a Brother of a sweeter spirit than this. When a poor younger Brother

ther comes home, and confeſſeth his miſcarriages to his Father, the Father entertains him, and there's joy in heaven under ſuch a returning ſoul. Well, doth the elder Brother come and pout, and take on, and diſcover a ſpirit of diſcontent; no, it's the joy of Chriſt's heart; O Brother, welcom Brother; well dear Brother, I rejoyce in you; I, you ſhall have your elder Brothers garments to put on.

A Brother, how a Brother? Truly ſuch a Brother as *Joſeph* was to his Brethren.

A Brother, a Shepherd; the Stone, the Shepherd of *Iſrael*, who being himſelf as it was with *Joſeph*, he being advanc'd to honour in *Pharaoh*'s Court, he entertains his Brethren, and ſpeaks kindly to them at length, after ſome reſervation of himſelf; his bowels melt over them, and entertains them, and uſes them kindly, and beſtows largely upon them, and rejoyces in them: And ſo it is with Jeſus our elder Brother, our *Joſeph*; he is glad to have his Brethren about him, and his heart melts over them.

And if ſo be that Chriſt's poor Brethren ſhould argue the caſe as *Joſeph*'s Brethren did, and ſay, It may be our Brother, now living in honour, and proſperity, and glory, it may be he will remember all the unkindneſs that we ſhewed him; we ſold our Brother *Joſeph* for a ſlave, and he now being in place and power, will be avenged on us: Oh, what ſaid *Joſeph* to his Brethren? No, no my Brethren, my honour is for your advantage, I ſhall not remember the wrongs and injuries that you have done me, but I look up to the hand of my God that ſent me into *Egypt* before you, to preſerve ſeed alive. So it is with Jeſus, and much more if his poor Brethren ſhould begin to have miſgivings of heart concern-

ing him, and think thus: O, our elder Brother, he is now in glory and honour, and at the Fathers right hand, and will he not remember all the unkindneſs we have done him? how we have wounded him, and how unworthy we have carryed it towards him; will he not keep all this in remembrance? No, nothing of this ſhall be remembred againſt his Brethren; but in the midſt of the Church will I ſing praiſe to thee, and I will rejoyce with my Brethren; O my Father, theſe are Brethren that my ſoul takes delight and pleaſure in.

And then again, Such a Brother is Chriſt, as indeed is born for adverſity; a Brother is born for adverſity: O, Chriſt was born for adverſity, for the adverſities of his People, that he might relieve them; and he was pleaſed to come into adverſity himſelf, that he might deliver the ſouls of his People from all their adverſity: Such a Brother is Chriſt, an elder Brother.

And ſuch a Brother, as will do the part of a Brother. It belong'd to a Brother under the Law, if his Brother died, to raiſe up ſeed to his Brother: Why truly, Jeſus our elder Brother, will raiſe up ſeed to his Brethren. And what's the meaning of that? He will maintain a ſeed of Grace in their ſouls, and he will maintain them. — I, he will raiſe up ſeed, that is, their bodies that lay in the duſt, he will raiſe up at the laſt day. Now, what a priviledge is this, to be in Relation to Chriſt, as to a Brother, by vertue of the Fathers Adoption to us? — That Jeſus Chriſt ſhould not be aſhamed, to call us his People, Brethren. Theſe are the fountains of comfort, and do ſpring from *Lebanon*; which if we were but well acquainted in them, would ſtream out, to the gladding and refreſhing of the ſouls of Believers.

lievers. — Conſider the priviledge of Juſtification, and how the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus promotes the comfort of that; — the priviledge of Adoption, and how the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt it doth promote the comfort of that. A Brother, O a Brother indeed; a Brother, that though he have a double portion, as the elder Brethren had; yet he will ſee to it, that all his Brethren ſhall become portioners with him; *Father, I will that thoſe thou haſt given me, be where I am*; one houſe ſhall hold us Brethren, and we will have one Inheritance: And though I am the chief among the Brethren, yet I own them as my Brethren; they ſhall fare as I fare, and they ſhall ſhare as I ſhare; for the ſubſtance of the portion, they ſhall ſhare as I ſhare, they ſhall be where I am, they ſhall ſee the glory that I have had with thee; and I cannot be contented to be in heaven, and to live there, without my Brethren. Here's the priviledge now; and if ſo be that we were not wofully implunged in the world, and of imbaſed ſpirits, O the thoughts of theſe things would make our hearts to ſpring up within us, in holy admirings of that rich and glorious Grace which by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt we are called unto the fellowſhip of.

SERM. XVI.

I Shall now acquaint you with another great priviledge; and that is,

A freedom from the Law: But underſtand it in a ſound ſenſe: There is a ſenſe given, according to which, Beleevers are not freed from the Law, nor is it their priviledge. I remember what the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 9. ſaith he, To them that were under the Law, as under the Law; and to them that are without Law, as without Law; *as* without Law, as under the Law: there are Myſteryes in theſe paſſages worthy the ſearching into: *As under the Law, and yet not under the Law; as without Law, and yet not without Law; not without Law to God, but under the Law to Chriſt.* So that in a ſound ſenſe, it is a duty, I, and a priviledge too, to be under the Law, under the Law to Chriſt: 'tis a priviledge not to be under the Law, according to what the Apoſtle ſpeaks, in *Rom.* 6. ſaith he, *We are not under the Law, but under Grace:* as the being under the Law, doth ſtand in oppoſition, (conſider that, and that will give ſome light to the matter in hand,) as a ſtate under the Law, doth ſtand in oppoſition to a ſtate in Grace, to a ſouls being under Grace: So it is the priviledge of every Beleever, every Saint in Chriſt, not to be under the Law. These things we ſhould be well acquainted with, and ſtudied in; eſpecially, conſidering the time that we have had for improvement in the knowledge of Chriſt. They are under the Law to Chriſt, and yet from under the Law, as ſuch a

ſtate

ſtate imports an oppoſition to a ſtate in Grace, that's one of the great priviledges which comes over to Believers by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that they are not under the Law.

And the comfort of this priviledge is very much advanc'd by a well improved Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when we come to know, and to know to ſome purpoſe (as it's fit we ſhould) what the ſtate was that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was put into; he was in a legal ſtate, he was made under the Law, and ſo ſtood under ſtrongeſt obligations, to perform moſt perfect obedience to the whole Law; he was a debtor to the whole Law by voluntary ſubjection (you muſt underſtand it ſo) to fulfil it to the utmoſt tittle of it: Not only to fulfil the duty and obedience which the Law required, but to ſatisfie and to anſwer the penalty; not only to bear the burden of Duty, but to bear the burden of the Curſe, and that in the behalf, and for the ſakes of thoſe which were given him of the Father. This is a great Point, and worthy to be well ſtudied in, and for every one that would approve himſelf to God, and promote his own comfort, to be well acquainted withal. — Chriſt was thus made under the Law, ſo his ſtate was a legal ſtate; and by vertue of his thus being made under the Law, upon this account the Saints of God, and Believers, they come to have their freedom: He was made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law; this priviledge comes over to us by Chriſt. Now, when this comes to be well known concerning Chriſt, by ſuch as believe in him, O what a ſweet injoyment may they have of themſelves in peace and comfort, when they ſhall come to know what the Law requires, and what are the vigorous exactings

of

of it, what are the preſſing burdens that it layes upon a ſoul, which are moſt heavy to be born: Nay, they are indeed unſupportable by any ſtrength that is now in the creature; what dreadful curſes the Law pronounces upon the tranſgreſſors of it. Now when a ſoul ſhall come to underſtand this; and yet withal, underſtands that Jeſus Chriſt, he was under the Law; and being ſo conſtituted, he hath fulfilled it to the utmoſt tittle; he hath anſwered all the requiries, and he hath undergon all the penalties, and the Law hath nothing to ſay againſt him, nothing to charge upon him. Now, when a Believing ſoul comes to know this concerning the Lord Jeſus, that he was made under the Law, that the ſoul might be delivered from the curſe of the Law; this is that that makes the comfort to flow in like ſtreams from *Lebanon*; theſe are the great things of the Goſpel, which concerns us exceedingly to be well inſtructed in. This I propound now, as one of the priviledges of the Goſpel, the comfort whereof comes over to us by a well improved Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

Conſider further, What reaſon there is that Believers, Chriſtians, ſhould endeavour to advance a growth in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, upon this account, That by this Knowledge well improved, we ſhall come to be very much advantaged for ſuffering, ſuffering with comfort, and with boldneſs and courage; and that's a great matter for us to conſider of: For it is not ſo much the ſuffering, as the comfortable ſuffering, and the confident ſuffering, and the couragious ſuffering of a Chriſtian that God is glorified by. Mark you, 'Tis not barely the ſuffering; the damned in Hell, they ſuffer, and ſhall ſuffer eternally; but what Glory hath

hath God from their ſuffering? Only thus far, he hath the glory of his Juſtice, in the inflicting of deſerved puniſhment upon them; he hath that glory: but otherwiſe, there is nothing of glory that's given to God by them in their ſufferings; there's Glory that God fetches and forces out of them, and he will do ſo out of every damned wretch, he will force a Glory to himſelf out of their ſufferings; but there is no Glory that doth reſult to God out of the ſufferings of the damned, as a Glory which they do actually give up to God. But now, God expects that his People ſhould be active in a way of glorifying him, when they are under their ſufferings; and then is God glorified, when his People ſuffer with courage, and with confidence, and with comfort and rejoycing, and are not of deſpondent ſpirits, do not fall under that.

Why now conſider, all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, and will approve themſelves in their godlineſs, they muſt reckon upon ſufferings; there is no coming to heaven by leaping over the brook; Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to drink of the brook in the way: There is a brook, and it runs with black and bitter ſtreams, and we muſt not think to leap over the brook, you muſt drink of it, and be plunged into it: Why all that will live godly in Chriſt, ſhall ſuffer. — What ſhall they ſuffer? what muſt they reckon upon to ſuffer? Suffer from God, ſuffer from men, ſuffer from Devils, ſuffer ſometimes through their own default, from their own Conſciences. Wherein now muſt they reckon to ſuffer?

Suffer in their ſouls by divine deſertions; — ſuffer in their ſouls by dreadful temptations; — ſuffer in their Conſciences by aſtoniſhing apprehenſions; I, and ſometimes there's their own default from their Con-

Conſciences; that's a ſuffering that Jeſus Chriſt is a meer ſtranger to, (take notice of that by the way;) Chriſt never ſuffered from his Conſcience. And I do not know whether it may not be peremptorily aſſerted, that he never ſuffered *in* his Conſcience: to be ſure, never *from* his Conſcience, his Conſcience never put him to any ſuffering; his Conſcience was alwaies his friend, and his comforter: He was not knowing to himſelf of any thing ſhould cauſe and create the leaſt trouble to him: Godly men are ſubject, through their own default, to ſuffer *in* their Conſciences, and *from* their Conſciences; — to ſuffer in their liberty; — in their eſtates; — in their names and reputations, by reproaches, and ſcorns, and contempts of the World; — To ſuffer in their eſtates, by loſſes, and ſad breaches upon them: — ſubject to ſuffer to the very loſs of their lives, by fiery tryals, and ſharpeſt perſecutions.

I, but now, whereas the great matter (as I ſaid before) is to know how a Beleever may ſuffer, and to ſuffer comfortably, to ſuffer couragiouſly, and not ſink under ſufferings: Though he drink of the brook in the way, yet that he may not be drown'd in the way; though he drink of it, yet he doth not ſink to the bottom of it, but he keeps his head aloft: this is a great matter for us to ſtudy, and to be well acquainted withal. Now conſider, O the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, it doth contribute moſt largely to ſuch a purpoſe: if ſo be that Chriſtians, Beleevers in Chriſt, had but a well-improved knowledge of Chriſt, well digeſted, (I do not ſpeak as I have told you, and ſhall further tell you) of a notional knowledge; to get a head full of notions, and yet in the

the mean time, the heart altogether unedified. We can babble over the Creed, as many do, that place their Religion and ſuch things in it. Though, I do not ſpeak, but that there may be good uſe to be made of thoſe old principles. But this is the miſery, that people reſt in words and forms; if they can patter over ſuch and ſuch a form, and ſay, *He was born of the Virgin* Mary, *ſuffered under* Pontius Pilate, *was crucified, dead and buried*; thus they can ſay, but in the mean time, know nothing in the World to any purpoſe: But I ſpeak of a heart-knowledge, a well-digeſted knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: and this knowledge will contribute very largely to the promoting of a Chriſtians comfortable undergoing his ſufferings, and keeps him up from ſinking under them: and it will appear thus, by conſidering:

Firſt of all, by knowing this concerning Chriſt; that this Lord Jeſus Chriſt, was himſelf a ſufferer; there's very much in this, that he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God; He that was the brightneſs of his Fathers Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon; He was pleaſed to put himſelf into ſuch a condition and ſtate, as that he might be capable of ſuffering: As he was the ſecond perſon, it was impoſſible for him to ſuffer; but he took a body with much complacency and delight, upon this very account, that he might be in a capacity to ſuffer, and ſuffer he did; never Man nor Angel the like; He ſuffered to the aſtoniſhing of the whole Creation; — He ſuffered from God, — He ſuffered from men, — He ſuffered from Devils: O the dreadful ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt! As I ſaid before, ſo I ſay it again; He did not ſuffer from his Conſcience, his heart did

did not reproach him; His heart within was clear, he had no terrors, his Conſcience, it raiſed up no terrors in him; that kind of ſuffering he was a ſtranger to. Now conſider this; was Chriſt Jeſus a ſufferer, and ſo deep and dreadful a ſufferer? why then a Beleever may comfort himſelf whatſoever ſufferings he falls under: why, bleſſed be God, my Lord Jeſus Chriſt was a ſufferer before me, he hath been in a ſuffering ſtate, and I have no reaſon to ſtartle at it, that my condition is a ſuffering condition: I am but now in a way to have conformity to Chriſt, and that's a bleſſed comfort. You muſt conſider a little, what ſhould the Apoſtle mean, when he profeſſes, in 1 *Cor.* 2. that *he determined to know nothing but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*: a ſuffering Chriſt; *Chriſt*, and a ſuffering Chriſt! what ſhould he mean by this, but that he was well and duly apprehenſive of the benefit and comfort, and ſuccour and ſupport, that would ſpring up to him from the conſideration of a ſuffering Chriſt: why, this is by my conformity to Chriſt, *I account all things* (ſaith he) *but loſs and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord.* There you have the very point in hand held forth: He ſpeaks concerning the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; I account all things but loſs and dung, for the excellency of this knowledge.— Why? *That I might know the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, and be made conformable unto his death*: I tell you Beloved, it's no matter what condition ſoever a perſon come into, if it be but ſuch a condition as wherein Chriſt hath been before him; only ſo, as wherein Chriſt hath been as one that hath gone before us, and made it a way for us to walk in. Indeed, the way of his mediati-

diation, the way of his meritorious ſacrificing, that's not a way that ever he walk'd in, ſo as to conſtitute it a way for his people to walk in; they are never able to live in that way: But the way wherein Chriſt hath been before us, and the condition which he hath been brought into, as a condition in which he would lead his people into: this is that that will comfort us in any ſuch condition; let the condition be what it will, Chriſt hath been in this condition before us: ſo that now here's the comfort to a Beleever, a Saint in Chriſt; I ſuffer thus and thus, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, I ſuffer as an evil doer, — ſo did Chriſt; Chriſt was before me: I ſuffer as an evil doer, unto bonds, I am perſecuted, ſo was Chriſt my Lord: —— I am reproach'd, and ſcorn'd, and revil'd in the World, ſo was my Lord Jeſus Chriſt: —— I am caſt into Priſon, ſo was my Lord Jeſus: — I am brought to the place of execution, Chriſt was hanged as a malefactor. There's much to ſupport the ſoul in this condition. And then,

Secondly, conſider this, This is the comfort that flowes out from the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, to ſupport in a ſuffering ſtate. Chriſt ſuffered, nay, but more than this, we are to conſider further, that he ſuffered penal ſufferings, legal ſufferings: O this, this hath added to the other, that we are to know concerning Jeſus Chriſt; that he ſuffered in a legal way: His obedience was legal obedience, not evangelical obedience, as ours ſhould be: ſo his ſufferings were legal ſufferings; why he ſuffered upon the account of Divine Juſtice; he ſuffered according to what the ſtrict Juſtice of God did and could inflict upon him for ſin and tranſgreſſion; and

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here was the bitterneſs of the cup; a thing that would be ſeriouſly weighed, and conſidered of by us: He ſuffered for ſinners; he put himſelf (as it were) into the ſtate and condition of a ſinner, of a malefactor. The guilt of the ſins of his people was ſet over to him: Thus it was, and upon this account, you muſt conceive, that there was not that rejoycing on Chriſt's part in his ſufferings, as that which ſometimes diſcovers it ſelf even in Beleevers, who have rejoyced at the ſtake, and kiſt the ſtake, and bid it welcome; and have been as full of joy and rejoycings as their hearts could hold; why there was reaſon for it: It was not ſo with Chriſt, but he was in an agony, and cryes out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Why Brethren, there was reaſon for it: Alas, Beleevers do not ſip one drop of that cup, and that's their mercy, and that's it that gives them comfort upon the conſideration of the ſufferings of the Lord Jeſus; becauſe the cup that was tempered unto him to drink of, it was a legal cup; it was a cup that the hand of Divine Juſtice temper'd up for him: Son, thou haſt put thy ſelf into the place of ſinners, and curſed malefactors, that have deſerved to drink of the wine of my wrath to all eternity: I'll temper a cup for thee; foraſmuch as thou haſt undertaken to appear on their behalf, thou ſhalt have a cup to drink off in their ſteads; and the hand of Juſtice tempers up this cup. Now, one drop of this legal cup, would have made all the Nations drunk, and have been made to ſpew, and fall; to fall down to Hell; one drop of this cup of Juſtice: but Chriſt muſt drink it up; He muſt make, by ſuffering, ſatisfaction to the Infinite Juſtice of a provoked Majeſty. Here's the buſi-

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neſs now: and alas, we are apt to paſs over theſe things ſlightly, and not conſider what the greatneſs of the love of Chriſt is, in undergoing ſuch a task, in drinking ſuch a cup! But judicious Chriſtians will weigh theſe things, and endeavour to underſtand concerning what was undergone by Jeſus Chriſt. 'Tis an aſtoniſhing conſideration, that it ſhould be thus ordered out concerning our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Now here's the comfort to poor beleeving ſouls under all their ſufferings; bleſſed be God, I ſuffer not in a legal way; I ſuffer not from the hand of Divine Juſtice; I ſuffer not in order to ſatisfaction; that's done to my hand: Here's my comfort, As I am not called out to pay debts with duties, I am not called out to pay debts with ſufferings: Here's the comfort of a Beleever, which flows out from the well-improved knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; that whatſoever his ſufferings be, they are not ſatisfactory ſufferings; they are not ſufferings upon a legal account; but they are ſufferings in a way of fellowſhip with Chriſt, as one that did ſuffer; but not as a ſufferer in order to ſatisfaction to God's Juſtice. So that now, upon the account of the ſuffering of our Lord Jeſus, as a legal ſufferer, and as one that took the cup from the hand of Divine Juſtice, which was tempered up by that hand; upon this account the poyſon is taken out of ſufferings; the terror of the bitterneſs of death is paſt; the bitterneſs of ſuffering is taken out; the ſting of the ſuffering is plucked out: what's the ſting of the ſuffering? *The ſting of death is ſin*; the ſting of a ſuffering is *ſin*. There's nothing that makes ſuffering ſo bitter to a ſenſible ſoul, an underſtanding Chriſtian; there's

nothing that makes it ſo bitter, as the conſideration of guilt: I, but the guilt is taken away, and ſo the ſting is taken out; the venom of the ſuffering is gone: The cup may be bitter, but it's a wholſome cup. This is now a ſecond thing to conſider; whereby you may come to underſtand, how much a well-improved knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, doth contribute to the promoting a Chriſtians comfortable, and bold, and confident ſuffering; and you will never be able to quit your ſelves in a ſuffering day, in a ſuffering ſtate, as becomes the Goſpel, if ſo be that theſe conſiderations concerning Chriſt, be not well digeſted.

3. Yet further; Chriſtians are ſubject to ſuffer, and it's your duty to ſuffer as Chriſtians, and to bear up with courage and confidence: but how ſhall that be, but by the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt? For mark you, This belongs to the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus; that the ſufferings of his people, for his Name, and Truth, and Goſpel; thoſe ſufferings are by Jeſus Chriſt, made their great priviledges. When a man ſuffers as an evil doer, as a murtherer, or a thief, or as a buſy-body in other mens matters; theſe kind of ſufferings of perſons as evil doers, when they are indeed deſervedly inflicted; theſe ſufferings, they reflect ſhame and diſhonour upon thoſe that undergo them. The two Theeves upon the Croſs, that were crucified together with Chriſt, and He in the midſt of them; you have the acknowledgement that one of them makes; This man is upon the Croſs with us, He ſuffers as we ſuffer, (as to the matter of ſuffering,) He is hanged, and ſo are we; we are here nail'd upon the Croſs, and ſo is He: I, but for all that, here's the difference; we indeed are juſtly here;

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for we ſuffer the reward of our own evil deeds; ſo that it's our diſhonour to be hanged up upon the Croſs: but this man is hanged indeed as a malefactor, but he hath done nothing worthy of ſuch a death: ſo it's no diſhonour to a Chriſtian; it's a diſhonour to an evil doer to ſuffer, when he ſuffers for his evil deeds; but it's no diſhonour to a Chriſtian, when he ſuffers as a Chriſtian, and there's no juſt cauſe for his ſufferings; it's no diſhonour, but it's rather an honour to him; ſaith the Apoſtle, *If any man ſuffer as a Chriſtian, let him not be aſhamed:* Aſhamed! he hath no cauſe in the World why he ſhould be aſhamed; let men deal how they will with him, if he ſuffer as a Chriſtian: though others ſeek to put him to ſhame, he may *deſpiſe* the ſhame, as our Saviour did; He *indur'd the Croſs*, but He *deſpiſed* the ſhame: Men would caſt ſhame upon Him; I, but Chriſt ſhames the ſhame; He deſpiſeth the ſhame; He puts the ſhame to ſhame. Thus did Chriſt: ſo a Chriſtian, he ſuffering as a Chriſtian, for the ſake of Chriſt, he hath reaſon ſo to do; to ſhame the ſhame, to deſpiſe the ſhame, to ſcorn the ſhame, and the ſcorns that are caſt upon him; ſaith he, *If any man ſuffer as a Chriſtian, let him not be aſhamed; but let him glorifie God in that behalf, for the ſpirit of God, and of Glory, reſts upon him.* And ſo did the Diſciples, in *Acts 5.* it's ſaid, They went away from the Counſel, where they had been beaten, and reproached; *They went away rejoycing, that they were accounted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the Name of the Lord Jeſus*; ſo that by Jeſus Chriſt, it becomes a matter of priviledge and honour to ſuffer. This Comfort flowes out of the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And take notice of that remarkable paſſage, in 1 *Phil.*

To you it is given; given as a gift: *To you it is given*; — what is given? — *Not only to believe on his Name, but to ſuffer for his ſake.* To you it is given; I, one would ſay; a goodly gift indeed, to have ſuffering given us: — A goodly gift; O, that's a wretched ſpirit, to undervalue this gift: *To you it is given, not only to believe*: is it a priviledge to have it given us to *believe*, to beleeve unto eternal life and ſalvation? I, but, ſaith he, To you it is given, not only to beleeve, but alſo to *ſuffer*: This is the gift of God, which he hath granted unto you as a priviledge; that you ſhould be ſufferers for Chriſt, and ingaged to appear in his Cauſe, and for his Name, in oppoſition to an evil and an adulterous Generation.

Again, by a well-improved knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall come to underſtand to the comforting, and the imboldening of the heart, that Chriſt is knowing of all the ſufferings that his ſervants undergo: *Knowing of them*, is that all? Nay, ſo knowing of them, as that he is ſenſible of them, and reckons them his own ſufferings; He hath a deep ſenſe: There is a *ſympathizing* with his people in all their ſufferings; if the *foot* on *Earth* be trod upon, the *Head* in *Heaven* complains; *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me? who art thou Lord? I am Jeſus.* True it is, thou canſt not reach my perſon, me as the *head*; but thou reacheſt me in my *members*; *Saul, Saul*, why doſt thou perſecute me?

And then conſider this withal, That by a well-improved knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall come to underſtand, that the ſufferings of Chriſt, they make way for Glory; having conformity to him in *ſuffering*, we may aſſure our ſelves,

ſelves, there ſhall be conformity to him in *Glory*: *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him*; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; And the ſufferings of this preſent time, is not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall follow. So that now, all this being laid together, we may well conclude upon it, that the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, is worthy to be endeavoured after, and that there may be a growth in it; becauſe it doth conduce ſo much to a comfortable, confident, courageous, and bold ſuffering on the behalf of Jeſus Chriſt.

SERM. XVII.

EVen as I was reading this Text this Morning, I had this Meditation: I was thinking how often this Text hath been read in your hearing, and ſounded in your ears; and is it not good for us (you and me) to conſider to what purpoſe it hath been ſo often ſounded? and whether we have made any Improvement in the grace of the Goſpel, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Shall the Scriptures ſpeak to us in vain? ſhall we be as if ſo be we were hearing of ſounding braſs, and a tinkling ſymbal? But however, thus it is, and this is our duty, to grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. I am ſpeaking yet concerning the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and that there ought to be a growth therein; and you have heard very largely, what convincing Arguments there are, why you ſhould labour after a well improved Knowledge of him, conſidering how beneficial this Knowledge is, and will be, to thoſe that have it. I ſhall now [illegible] to ſomething further that remains, and ſo proceed on to the Application of this Point.

There is very great reaſon, why Chriſtians ſhould endeavour to advance in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that in order to the promoting of a Goſpel Converſation, that it may be managed with beauty, and with boldneſs, to the credit of the Goſpel, and the holy Profeſſion which is made of it: By a well improved Knowledg of our

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Lord Jesus Christ, great advantage comes over to us for such a purpose.

First, here you are to consider this, That a Christian is not to live at a ghess, and at random; those that will approve themselves in their holy Profession, must see to it, that their conversations be well ordered; it is *he that orders his conversation aright, that shall see the salvation of God*; and much care and diligence is to be used to this purpose, that the conversation may be ordered in a due manner, that so we may come to have the comfort, and joy, and peace at last: They that walk according to rule, Scripture rule, and Scripture example, they are the persons upon whom there shall be peace and mercy, as the Apostle speaks in *Gal. 6.* It is not for men and women professing Godliness, to live (as I have sometimes said) by rote, but to live and walk by rule, and by warrantable example. And,

2ly. I offer this to be considered, that Jesus Christ is the most absolute pattern for a Christian to conform unto, and to take example by him: And this duty is incumbent upon all that will approve themselves in Godliness, to set their hearts upon this, that they may be conformed unto Christ; Believers and Saints are predestinated to have a conformity unto the Lord Jesus. And the Apostle tells us, 1 *Joh.* 2. *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself so to walk, even as Christ walked.* It is a very weighty Scripture, and doth very much concern us to be well studied in: He that saith he abideth in Christ, or that professeth himself for to belong to Christ, and to have a union with Christ, an interest in Christ, he ought to walk even as he also walked. — Now, consider how strongly it follows upon the premises, That therefore it concerns all

that will approve themſelves in their Converſation, to endeavour to be well acquainted with the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to endeavour an advance in that Knowledge, to be as well inſtructed in the Knowledge of Chriſt as they can; — Why? — Why becauſe it is he who is the Copy after which we are to write, the pattern to which we are to conform; and how it is likely that any man ſhould anſwer the Copy, write congruouſly to the Copy, which he hath little or no ſight and knowledge of; work in any ſutableneſs to the pattern, which he is in great part a ſtranger to. This then is the buſineſs that we ſhould mind and conſider of, in order to a well regulated Converſation, that there be a purſuance in the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt; and particularly, that we know the manner of his Converſation: If ſo be that we would walk as Chriſt walked, it's neceſſary we ſhould know how Chriſt walked, what ſteps he trod in, and the paths wherein he walked. And this I ſhall give you ſome account of, as touching the life and converſation of Chriſt here upon earth. In the general, conſider thus.

First of all, you are to know and believe, That Jeſus Chriſt was in the World, though the World knew him not, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in *Joh.* 1. *He was in the world.* The world indeed would not know nor take knowledge of him; but this is that we are to acknowledge and believe, that Jeſus Chriſt was in the World, and that he lived and converſed here among the ſons of men; and he lived ſuch a life as was moſt exemplary, and ſo continues to be; and he hath everlaſtingly broken the force of ſuch an argument and plea, as poor carnal wretches are apt to make in their own behalfs, when their vitious, corrupt,

corrupt, carnal, profane lives are tax'd, and they themſelves are cenſured for them. Men are apt to plead, How is it poſſible that we ſhould live otherwiſe in the world, a wretched world, a world that lyes in wickedneſs? There are ſo many corrupt principles, and corrupt examples; how can it be that we can live in ſuch a world, and live as we ought? — Why this Plea is fully broken; it was broken upon the account of the lives and converſations of other godly ones, that have lived from the beginning of the world. — The world was ſtark nought in *Enoch*'s dayes, in *Noah*'s dayes; yet for all that they walk'd with God, and they ordered a converſation to the honour of God, and approved themſelves in the courſe of their walking. — The world was very bad in *Eliah*'s time, and ſo in the times of others; yet for all that they carried themſelves very gratiouſly in an evil world. But this example of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is that that breaks the force of ſuch an Argument, why he was in the world, and yet he lived moſt exactly and congruouſly to the whole life of God; and he hath taught us by his example, That it is not ſo much the place as the principle that we are to mind; the principle and the conſtitution: If ſo be that a perſon be of a good conſtitution, and well principled, he will live well enough in any place. A godly perſon will be godly in heaven among Saints and Angels; a godly perſon that is truly ſo, he will be godly on earth, if he be there among profane perſons: And I think I may ſay, that if it could be that a godly man were in Hell, he would ſhew his godlineſs there; I am bold to ſpeak it, that if a child of God were in Hell, he would love God there, and he would pray there. I remember, and ſometimes upon

upon occaſion have ſpoken to that purpoſe, That *Jonah* when he was in his own apprehenſion caſt off of God, and in the belly of Hell, as one in the very belly and bowels of Hell; yet there he falls a praying, *Out of the belly of hell cryed I.* A wicked man, if he could be in heaven, and be there with his own principles, he would be a wicked man there; and ſurely for Hell, a godly man would be a godly man there, *Hell changes no natures*; nor indeed doth heaven, upon the matter, Heaven doth not change nature; Heaven it ſelf conſidered as a place of glory, would not change the nature of a wicked man; the change muſt be made here on earth. Thus, now having propounded this as a general, That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he did live and converſe in the world; — but what account is there to be given of his life? what is there belonging to a well improved Knowledge in the Life and Converſation of Chriſt? To give you a brief account of this.

First of all, in the general, The Life and Converſation of Chriſt, it was a Scripture converſation. The Lord Jeſus, who is now in heaven, he liv'd in the world, he liv'd firſt and laſt a Scripture life; and this I ſpeak to the confutation of the faces of all ſuch as are apt to ſlight the Scriptures, and make light of them, that Jeſus Chriſt, while he converſt in the world, his whole life and converſation was a very Scriptural converſation, it was nothing elſe but a fulfilling of Scripture. O Beloved, conſider of this, as a material and momentous thing, That the whole life and converſation of Chriſt was a Scriptural converſation. How often do you read this paſſage, Thus and thus Chriſt did, thus and thus it was ordered out concerning him, that it might be ful-

fulfilled which was written in the Scriptures. You read this now, over and over we have it in Scriptures; thus and thus it was done, that it might be fulfilled which was written in the Scriptures, ſo that the life of Chriſt it was a fulfilling of Scripture: There was never a Scripture in all the Bible, which Chriſt could not with boldneſs look upon, and did not moſt fully correſpond with, I tell you, it is a ſerious matter for to conſider of; I give a touch upon it now, I may have occaſion by and by to ſpeak ſomething to ſuch a purpoſe.

It were very good for us to conſider, whether we are able to look the Scriptures in the face; ſuch a Text, ſuch or ſuch a Scripture precept, ſuch or ſuch a Scripture example, and not bluſh and be aſhamed. I remember (and ſo may you) when the Book of the Law was found, and brought to *Joſiah*, and he heard it read, his heart melts within him, and he is very deeply paſſionate, and he mourns and humbles his ſoul before God, to think of the incongruity that was between the Book, and the carriages, and converſations of the People: So Brethren, and Beloved, conſider but this, put it to your Conſciences; Is there not many a Text in Scripture which you are not able to look in the face, not able to behold with any boldneſs? You have not the boldneſs to look ſuch or ſuch a Text in the face. — As now your Adulterer, can he look this Text in the face? *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*; — the Covetous man, can he look that Text in the face, which ſaith, The *Covetous* man, *he is an idolater, he ſhall never inherit the Kingdom of God? Let your converſations be without covetouſneſs.* Can he look this Text in the face? — The Hypocrite, the formal Profeſſor, that pleaſeth himſelf

ſelf in a form of Godlyneſs, and is an enemy to the power of Godlyneſs, can he look that Text in the face? 2. *Tim.* 3. 5. *In the laſt daies, perilous times ſhall come, and having a form of Godlyneſs, but denying the power of it; from ſuch turn aſide.*—— The ſenſual, licentious perſon, can he look this Text in the Face? *If you live after the fleſh, you ſhall dye; but if ye through the ſpirit, do mortifie the deeds of the body, you ſhall live*; and a thouſand more of this kind I might inſtance in. O Friends, it is a ſerious matter that I am now ſpeaking about; whether we can look the Scriptures in the face without regret of ſpirit, check and controul of Conſcience. Jeſus Chriſt, who is the moſt abſolute pattern, he could do ſo; His whole life was a Scripture-life, a fulfilling of Scripture: there was never a Text in all the Bible, but he had the boldneſs to look it in the face. This is that that is to be known concerning the Life of Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, and more particularly; it belongs to the knowledge of Chriſt to know this; That it was a blameleſs and in-offenſive life: It's requir'd of Beleevers, that they carry it as the Sons of God, *blameleſs and harmleſs, without rebuke*: O ſuch was exactly the life of Chriſt, a harmleſs, blameleſs, in-offenſive life: He never *gave* offence to any in all his life, and he was very carefull of doing it; He would rather be abridged of his liberty and priviledge, than he would give offence: as in the caſe of the Tribute; *Simon, of whom do the Kings of the Earth take Tribute, of your own children, or ſtrangers? Of Strangers*, ſaith *Peter:* why then *I am free from the Tribute; I but leſt we ſhould offend them*, go thy waies, and take ſuch a courſe, that there

there may be a payment of the Tribute: *Give no offence*; He never did give juſt offence; much offence was taken at him, but no offence was given by him. This was the Life of Chriſt, 2 *Tim.* 2. laſt. He offended no man, gave no juſt occaſion of offence to one or other, neither to Jew or to Gentile.

3. The Life of Chriſt, it was a convincing Life: His Life carried Life in it: as the Apoſtle ſaith, in the firſt of *John*, *The light was the life of men.* O, Jeſus Chriſt's life, was a light of life! It was a life that held forth light in it; convincing the World of ſin, and righteouſneſs. What is ſaid of *Noah* and his Converſation; *he condemned the World*, by building of the Ark, *Heb.* 11. It may moſt truly be ſaid of our Lord Jeſus; He convinc'd the World, and condemned it, by his gracious and holy Converſation.

4. Conſider, The Life and Converſation of Chriſt, was a conflicting and combating Converſation: Conflicting, not with corruption within, that he had none of; he had no principles of ſin in him. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of himſelf, *I find a Law in my members, rebelling againſt the Law of my mind, leading me Captive.* There was no ſuch conflict in Chriſt, nothing of ſin in him; the Prince of the World had no intereſt in him, ſo that he was free of that conflict: But he had men and devils to conflict with: O how much was he in colluctation, and ſtrugling, and wreſtling, and ſtriving with Principalities and Powers, and with the men of the World! *Jeruſalem* cryed out; O Lord, *Thou haſt made me a man of Contention*; truly, ſo was Chriſt; *I am not come to ſend peace, but a ſword*; *Contention*, yet notwithſtanding, the moſt peaceable per-

perſon that ever was in the World. A man of Contention; but how came it to be ſo; becauſe his Doctrine and Converſation was ſo croſs and contrary to a wicked and ſinful Generation: Chriſt's life was a conflicting life, with men and devils.

5. The life of Chriſt, and his Converſation; it was a fruitfull, and a profitable life: O, what bleſſed benefit and profit did, and doth come over unto Beleevers, by the Life and Converſation of Chriſt. (I cannot inſiſt upon theſe particulars, only give you a hint of them.)

6. The Life and Converſation of Chriſt, it was a holy, nay, a heavenly Life: It's ſaid of *Enoch*, that *he walk'd with God*; more true of Chriſt: The Apoſtle ſaith, *Their Converſation was in Heaven*; much more the Converſation of Chriſt, a heavenly Converſation; He liv'd, and converſed with God from day to day.

7. The Life and Converſation of Chriſt; it was a painful and laborious life; a life of labour and hard travel; never was time ſo well husbanded, ſo well ſpent, as the time that Chriſt had to ſpend in the World, not one minute of it runs out to waſte; he went about continually doing good, preaching from place to place; ſpending himſelf in the behalf, and for the behoof and benefit of poor ſouls: a laborious life was the life of Chriſt.

8. The Life of Chriſt, it was a praying life: O how much was he in prayer and ſupplication unto God; He ſpends a whole night in prayer: when he could not get to that ſervice in the day, he would be ſure to take time for it in the night: O how much was he in intimate converſings with the Father in the way of prayer. 9. The

9. The life of Chriſt, it was a ſelf-denying life: O moſt eminent was Chriſt for this, that he was of a ſelf-denying ſpirit; and his life in the whole of it, a ſelf-denying life; denying himſelf, Father, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

10. The Life of Chriſt, it was a world-deſpiſing life; when they would come by force, and make him a King, he declines it, and withdraws himſelf, and turns his back upon all worldly preferments and injoyments.

11. The Life of Chriſt, was a God-pleaſing, and honouring life; He pleaſed not himſelf, he ſtudied to pleaſe his Father, and to profit the ſouls of his people: He was for God-pleaſing, and man-profiting: and this was the whole tenor of the Life of Chriſt. He devoted himſelf thus, that he might be pleaſing to God, that he might be profitable to man.

12. And to add no more (though other particulars might be brought in;) The Life of Chriſt, it was a perſevering life; He began well, he continued well, he ended well. *Paul* could ſay of himſelf, *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the Faith*; Chriſt could ſay it more than any man; I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the truth; I have kept my way without divertion, he held on to the laſt; having honoured God, he honoured him to the death; having loved God and his people, he loved them to the end; having ingaged to glorifie God, he glorified him to the laſt; His laſt breath was a holy breathing into the boſome of God. This is the account that is to be given of the Lord Jeſus.

Now

Now conſider, O how profitable and beneficial will this knowledge well improved, be unto Beleevers! —— profitable to ſhame them! —— profitable to provoke their imitation! —— profitable to promote their comfort.

Profitable to ſhame them: Now, when we come to know what a life Chriſt liv'd, what an exemplary life, what an even thred he ſpun, what a webb he wove; and when we come to conſider what our life is, what a difference between Chriſt's life and our life, whoſe life ſhould be ſet before us as a copy to write after: O how will this cauſe ſhame of face, ſorrow of heart! I remember the Lord gives a charge to the Prophet *Ezek.* That he ſhew the pattern to the houſe of *Iſrael*; and wherefore? — that they may be aſhamed: — why I ſhew'd you the pattern this morning, of the Life of Chriſt: and truly, it may well make us aſhamed, — to think Chriſt lived in the World a Scripture-life: but alas, how far are we from keeping conformity unto Scriptures in our lives? — He lived an in-offenſive life: how offenſive are many of us in our converſations and carriages, laying ſtumbling blocks in the way? — The Life of Chriſt was a conflicting life: what is there in us of conflicting with luſts and corruptions, and a ſinful World? — The Life of Chriſt a convincing life, a condemning life; convincing of ſin, condemning of ſin: ſuch ſhould our converſations be. But alas, how little is there of conformity to Chriſt? — The Life of Chriſt, a praying life; —— a laborious life; — a fruitful life; — a God-pleaſing life; — a ſelf-denying life: Alas, we may look upon the pattern, and be aſhamed to behold it, becauſe of our incongruity to it. He that ſaith he

abides

abides in Christ, ought himself so to walk, even as he walked: How many profess to have an abiding in Christ, and yet do not comport with his example, and conform to the pattern that he hath given us for imitation; and so far as we are awanting to this copy, so far we dishonour the Name of God, and are awanting to the crediting of our holy profession: O, thus would a well improved knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ be beneficial to us, to the humbling and shaming of us; to think, such was Christ, but how unanswerable are we? A *humble* Christ, a *holy* Christ, a *heavenly* Christ, a *self-denying* Christ, a *sin-hating* Christ, a *world-despising* Christ, and we express nothing of it.

And how would this promote to duty, and provoke to imitation? O, so would the knowledge of our Lord Jesus, and of his life well-improved, provoke our imitation of him, and make us set to it with diligence and care. Did Christ live thus? then surely, it concerns me to look better to my life and conversation, that I may be able to give a better account of it than otherwise I am like to do.

And then to promote the comfort of a Christian, and make him bear up with boldness in the mid'st of an evil Generation; when he is able to plead, thus I am, and I am tuter'd to it by the walking of Jesus Christ.

Now, to draw to a close; The last thing that I will insist upon, as to this Doctrinal part; there is an account to be given of the life of Christ in Heaven. You have heard of his Life on earth; but there is belonging to the knowledge of Christ to consider, what his Life in Heaven is: For this we are to know, and sad were it with Saints and

Beleevers, if this were not accounted of: That he that was in a ſtate of death, and he that did riſe again; He lives, and is alive for evermore. Now, if it were not for this, Chriſtians were of all men in the World, the moſt miſerable; but this our Saviour ſpeaks of himſelf, *Rev.* 1. 18. *I am he that was dead, but I am alive; and behold, I live for evermore, Amen. I am alive for evermore, Amen.* And this he held forth for the comfort of his people, and to let them know he is alive for evermore; to this purpoſe, To ſee to the accompliſhing and fulfilling of all that in the Revelation is made known for the benefit and comfort of the Church of God, while it is here in its Militant ſtate, untill the day come that it ſhall be together with him ingaged in everlaſting Triumphs over Death, and Devils, and Anti-Chriſt, and World, and Sin and all: This belongs unto the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, to know that he lives: — And what's his Life in Heaven? — briefly thus:

Firſt, it is a Life of Glory; for he is now entered into Glory, and he lives in the fulleſt poſſeſſion of all the Glory that the Father, and Angels, and Glorified Saints can conferr upon him, and give unto him: He hath all the Glory that Heaven can beſtow upon him. The Lord Jeſus, he lives now in Glory, and he prayed for this, *Father, I have glorified thee on the Earth; now Father, glorifie thou me with the Glory which I had with thee from the beginning.* Jeſus Chriſt is entered into his Glory, and he is clothed with it now; He is clothed all over with Majeſty and Glory; He lives in Heaven now a life of Glory, and ſo hath done ever ſince He was received up into Heaven.

2. His

2. His life is a life of Power; all Power is given to him, he hath the keys of Hell, of Life, of Death, he hath the keys of Heaven and Hell; all power is committed to him, and he is inveſted with it: So that the life of Chriſt is a life of Power; he liv'd here in the world under weakneſs, as touching his humanity: but he lives now (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) though he was crucified through weakneſs, yet he lives by the power of God, 2 *Cor.* 13.

3. And then, his life is a life of Peace; he had much trouble in the World, but all his trouble is over, and he is entered into everlaſting Peace.

4. The life of Chriſt in Heaven, it is a life of Reſt.

5. It is a life of Joy and Rejoycing: O, Chriſt is at Gods right hand, and at the right hand of God; there is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſure for evermore; as the Prophet ſpeaks, in *Pſal.* 16.

6. The life of Chriſt, it is a Kingly life, he lives in the ſtate of a King; and God hath given him a Name above every name, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: I, and know this,

7. This life of Chriſt, it is a life of Knowledge and Obſervation; Chriſt in Heaven lives an obſerving life, he obſerves all the actions and tranſactions that are here below, he knows all the workings in the Nations and Kings of the World, he knows all the oppoſitions that are made againſt him by the powers here below; — he knows the ſtate of all the Churches, and all the carriages of his Churches and People; as in the *Revelations*, he orders to all the Churches it ſhould be ſignified, I know thy Works, and what thy condition and ſtate is. Chriſt lives a life of Obſervation.

8. And he lives a life of Compaſſion too: O,

that's a comfortable conſideration, that the Lord Jeſus in Heaven; he lives a life of Compaſſion, he hath not left his bowels of compaſſion here behind him, but he is as merciful a High-Prieſt now as ever he was; he was good in the world, he is as full of bowels, and of tender love to his poor Church and People, now he is in Heaven, as he was when he was upon Earth; all his glory in Heaven ſhall never make him forget his poor ſuffering Members here on earth: *Saul, Saul*, Why perſecuteſt thou me?

9. The life of Chriſt in Heaven, it is a life of Satisfaction: And yet withal,

10. It is a life of Expectation; he hath fulleſt ſatisfaction in reſpect of his Father, and of his injoyments at the right hand of God; he hath ſweeteſt ſatisfaction concerning all the travel that he did undergo, while he was converſant here in the World; according to that, *Iſa.* 53. So doth Chriſt; he now in Heaven looks over all his travel, he conſiders all the coſt and charge that he was at to redeem the World, and he thinks not one peny too much that he hath paid; (to ſpeak with a holy Reverence) not one peny of all the payment too much to be laid down to purchaſe a People, to purchaſe an Inheritance; he doth not think that there was one drop of his Blood too much to be ſhed, that he might redeem a People to himſelf, and bring them to the poſſeſſion of an eternal Inheritance: And yet notwithſtanding, the life of Chriſt in Heaven, is a life of Expectation, not that his expectation is any way ~~affective~~ affective to him, doth any way impead the ſweetneſs and comfort of the life that he now lives in Glory; but it is a life of joyful Expectation. He lives in this double Expectation;—

First,

Firſt, till all his enemies be made his foot-ſtool. —. He lives in this Expectation, expecting the coming of that time, when all his Saints that he hath redeemed from the World, and purchaſed with his Blood, be in his hand, and brought to Glory. Now, this is no diſquieting expectation, but a moſt joyful expection, that Chriſt lives in, to ſee the utter downfal of all his enemies, and to have them under his feet: And according to that which you in *Heb.* 10. 13. ſaith he (ſpeaking concerning the Prieſts in the old Teſtament *This man, after he had offered one ſacrifice for ſins for ever, ſate down on the right hand of God.* There's his life: — *from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his foot-ſtool: for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* This is now one part of Chriſt's Expectation, which he is upon in Heaven, That all his enemies, be they who they will, never ſo many, never ſo mighty, he lives in the expectation of their downfal, and being brought under his feet; and of this expectation he ſhall not be diſappointed in the leaſt, no, not in the leaſt. The life of Expectation which Chriſt doth now live in Heaven, it is ſuch a life as wherein he hath a moſt ſweet enjoyment; he knows he ſhall be anſwered in this Expectation of his.

And ſo likewiſe his expectation of having all his people that he hath purchaſed with his blood, given into his actual poſſeſſion: He prayed for this in his laſt prayer, Father, I will, that all thoſe which thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may ſee my glory, and ſhare with me in that glory which is to be had in heaven. This was his ſupplication, and ſutable is his expectation, That the time ſhall come when he ſhall have all his Saints in his hand, and not one of them wanting. Now,

this is the Knowledge that we are to have of the life of Christ in heaven; — a life of Glory, — a life of Power, — a life of Peace, — a life of Rest, — a life of Joy and Rejoycing, — a Kingly life, — a life of Observation, — and a life of Satisfaction, — and a life of Expectation; such is the life that Christ lives. Now, O how worthy is this Knowledge to be pursued, and that every Believer should labour to be well improved in the Knowledge of this life of Christ in Heaven, both for his greatest incouragement and comfort, to think that that Jesus who died, now lives, and lives for evermore in Heaven: — That he is now in power; he that was crucified through weakness, he lives through the power of God. — Why, this Jesus, he lives now in the fullest injoyment of all that happiness that can be conferred upon him, — and in the expectation of having all his enemies subdued, — and all his People brought over to him, that he and they may solace themselves eternally in the vision and fruition of God, and of one another. O what a comfort is this now, for to know and consider of: It was the joy of the heart of *Jacob*, and made the old mans heart to leap within him, and to revive again, to hear that his son *Joseph* was alive, and in honour in *Pharaoh*'s Court. O how much more joyful will it be, to the rejoycing of the heart of a child of God, that hath set his love upon Christ, to think that his Jesus is in heaven at God's right hand, in the possession of all that honour and glory which heaven it self can confer upon him. — And thus, now I have travelled with you, and I confess it hath been somewhat a long journey that I have travelled in the handling of this Point, in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus, and how much it concerns Belee-

vers

vers to endeavour a growth and increaſe in it, conſidering how every way the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus will be beneficial to them, to the promoting of grace, — inabling to ſuffer, — fitting for Duty, — and for the promoting of a holy Converſation (and the like.) Now, all that hath been ſpoken, doth iſſue in this, That the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is a Knowledge that our hearts ſhould be exceedingly ſet upon.

Now for the Improvement of this by way of Uſe, I ſhall make ſhort work of that; but, O that you would but weigh and conſider what hath been ſpoken in ſo many Sermons that I have preached to you upon this Doctrine; and for the Application, I ſhall be brief in that.

Now I would beſeech you, conſider with your ſelves, you with whom I have to deal; will you but conſider with your ſelves, whether I have been in this matter that I have performed, performing a proper Service, or whether I have not in your account been imployed in a needleſs work, whether your hearts will not ſuggeſt ſuch a thing to you: You have been preaching to us concerning the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, what have you told us that we knew not before? and you preſs upon us that we ſhould endeavour a growth in in this Knowledge, and be upon our improvements; but alas, what are we the further advanced in this Knowledge? So that now, if ſo be that I ſhould come to act and perform the part of a reprover, poſſibly there may be ſuch a ſpirit found, that you will think, what have you told us? we knew that Chriſt took upon him the nature of man, and he came into the world, and liv'd, and died here, and was crucified, and buried, and roſe again,

and aſcended into heaven, and ſits at the right hand of God: every common nominal Chriſtian can chatter over theſe things, and think with themſelves, what needs all this ado about a growth and increaſe in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

O but Brethren, I would ſay to you as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in a like caſe, 1 *Cor.* 8. I know well enough that you have all knowledge; I, and your knowledge makes you conceited, it puffs you up; *But if any man think he knows any thing, he knows nothing as he ought to know.* It were good for you and me to look well to it, that our light be not found to be darkneſs, that our knowledge be not found to be ignorance. This I would have ſaid, that there are clear demonſtrations and convincing Arguments, that ſome know nothing as they ought to know; — others that do know, they are not ſo improved in their knowledge as they ought to be. I tell you this, look to it, for of a truth your being ſo defective in the faith of the Goſpel, your being ſo apt to fluctuate, and be turmoyl'd in your conſciences, your being ſo uneven in your walking, your being ſo low ſpirited as you are, your ſmall meaſures of faith, and love, and hope, and confidence, and boldneſs towards God; — and your aptneſs to be ſtartled at every providence, and to be foyled by every temptation: theſe and ſuch like things do loudly ſpeak it out, that of a truth you do not know Chriſt as you ought to know him; I ſpeak to one and other of us: we ſhall find, and be able to evidence it, the conſcience will be convinc'd of it, That we know not as we ought to know, we have not made that advance in the Knowledge of Chriſt as we ſhould have done, becauſe it is thus

and

and thus with us, we have no more love to Christ: did you know Christ as you ought, you would never dote upon the world as you do, nor be so inslav'd to your corruptions as you are; did you know Christ as you ought to know, you would live more honourably, and more to the credit of the Gospel than you do. There are many, many things that will evidence it to us, that we do not know Christ as we ought to know.

SERM.

SERM. XVIII.

HOw Righteous, yea, how Gracious this Requirie is, That believing ſouls ſhould grow in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, hath been abundantly demonſtrated and made to appear unto you. Wiſdom is juſtified of her children; if we be Wiſdom's children, it will appear, and ſo it muſt, by our juſtification of Wiſdoms ſayings, and giving in our juſtification, we come under the ſtrongeſt obligation for to carry it in a ſutableneſs unto what we profeſs to be. Now, taking it for granted, that we do acknowledge this to be a truth, that it is our duty to grow in the Knowledge of Chriſt, as that which is the moſt excellent, and the moſt beneficial Knowledge; this Knowledge (which as you heard the laſt day) will conduce very much to the well regulating of a Chriſtians converſation, when it comes to be known to purpoſe, what a life Chriſt himſelf did live while he was in the World; — what a life Chriſt lives now he is in Heaven; which two things were accounted to you at large in ſeveral particulars. That which now remains to be done, is to make application of all that hath been ſaid, and ſo to preſs on after the improving of this Doctrine.

Something in the very cloſe of the laſt Exerciſe was ſpoken to you. May I now without any check from within, appear among you this Morning, as a reprover for God, and in the behalf of God, and in the behalf of Chriſt, and not be accounted needleſly and cauſleſly to pick a quarrel. I remember what

what *David* ſaid to his quarrelſom Brother, upon occaſion of his coming unto the Camp, when he was inquiring what would be done to the man that ſhould ſlay the *Philiſtine*: He replies to his quarrelling Brother; What have I done, is there not a cauſe? So, if ſo be there ſhould be any inward ſecret quarrel at what ſhall be ſpoken, in way of reproof and blame, I would ſpeak as *David* did, and ſay, Is there not a cauſe?

The Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, is unqueſtionably, and undeniably, pretious Knowledge, — excellent Knowledge, — profitable and beneficial Knowledge: but, is it prized? is it purſued? will our Conſciences bear us witneſs, that we are upon our endeavours after it, that we may advance and improve in it, and that we may anſwer the duty of this Text, which makes this charge upon us, that we grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus? *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows all things.* Is there not a Conſcience within us that can witneſs againſt us, that this pretious Knowledge it was never very pretious unto us? This Knowledge did never come to be pleaſant to our ſouls; ſo pleaſant, as that we could ſay with the Apoſtle, We account all things but loſs and dung for the excellency of the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. May it not, without breaking the bounds of charity, be thought and judged that there are many, yea, very many, that profeſs the Name of Chriſt, and would be in account for Godlineſs, that know little or nothing, and nothing at all to any purpoſe concerning the Lord Jeſus, and are not at all troubled at it, that they ſhould be ſo unacquainted with this Knowledge of our Lord

Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt? And are there not ſuch as are apt to think, that they know as much concerning Chriſt, and the Myſteries of his Kingdom, as much as need to be known; and ſo there is no cauſe why they ſhould much trouble themſelves with ſuch a buſineſs as this, for to be ſolicitous about the knowing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

I would ſpeak this Morning in this part of the Diſcourſe, to two ſorts of perſons.

Firſt of all, to ſuch (if ſuch there be among us, poſſibly there may be ſome ſuch, though I hope not altogether ſo many) that are ſtrangers unto any true ſaving Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; peradventure they have ſome common notions of Chriſt, and can (as I ſaid) patter over a form of words, and ſay, *I believe in Jeſus Chriſt, his only Son our Lord, which was conceived by the holy Ghoſt, and born of the Virgin* Mary, *and ſuffered under* Pontius Pilate, *and was crucified, dead and buried, and roſe again the third day, and aſcended into heaven, and ſits on the right hand of God*; they can patter over ſuch a form of words, but to little or no purpoſe in the world, and upon the matter are as blind as Beetles, as Batts; ſee nothing, underſtand nothing to purpoſe concerning the Myſterie, *Which is Chriſt in his People, the hope of Glory.* O that there were not ſuch to be found, as ſetting aſide the Name of Chriſt, they have heard of ſuch a name in the World, by common fame and report, but know no more of Chriſt than the very Heathens, and Pagans, and thoſe that never were within the line of Goſpel Communication: I am verily perſwaded that there are ſuch to be found within the territories of this Nation, that can give no more account of Chriſt, and of the Myſteries that concern him, than the groſſeſt

groſſeſt Heathens that ever were in the World, excepting common fame of him, and report that's taken up, which they can give no good account of in all the world; and ſo truly, ſuch perſons may be ſent to School to the Devil (but that he doth not keep a School for Chriſt, and to teach the Knowledge of Chriſt) but is a deſperate enemy to it; but otherwiſe, as touching the ability of the Devil, and of the damned Spirits, truly there are many, I, many might be ſent to School to the Devil to learn of him: underſtand me aright; I ſay, as touching his ability, for he is notionally, and apprehenſively, and indeed by a neceſſity, he is very much knowing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Devils are: *We know thee who thou art, even the holy one of God.* This was the profeſſion that the Devils made; they did know him when he was in the World, and they do know now what he is, and what account is to be given of him, and that he will appear to their everlaſting confuſion and condemnation. Thus it is, theſe perſons are in no condition to grow in the Knowledge of Chriſt, for they have not ſo much as the firſt grounds and principles of that Knowledge, but rude and raw, and altogether unſeen in thoſe Myſteries that concern the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: It is ſomewhat ſtrange, that perſons living in a Land of light, and of Goſpel-diſcovery, that there ſhould be any found under ſuch groſs darkneſs; but it is too true, that there are too many in that condition. I have read, and you have heard it accounted to you (it hath been both by my ſelf, and by other hands) by a learned Divine, of an antient man, that lived for forty years under a powerful conſtant Miniſtry, and yet when he came to lye upon his death-bed, and was examined concerning his

his Knowledge (truly it would make ones heart to tremble to give the account) of God, and of Chriſt, and of his Soul, and of his final eſtate: I forbear to give you the anſwers which were made. — If ſo be that we ſhould deal with ſome, and it may be ſome of long ſtanding in the world, and take a courſe to catechize and examine what they know of Jeſus Chriſt, of his Perſon, of his Natures, of his Offices and Adminiſtrations, and of his Sufferings, and of his preſent ſtate of Glory; it may be we ſhould find an utter inability to give any tollerable account of theſe things. — Now, will you but conſider a little what follows upon this, what the Judgment is that is to be made concerning ſuch, how ſad their condition is, that are unacquainted with this Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Firſt, Suppoſe they have any Knowledge of God, either by nature, or by common illumination, by what way ſoever; if there be not the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, truly whatever they know of God, will never turn to their comfort, and benefit, and advantage, but rather prove their torment: He that ſinneth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Chriſt, hath not God; whatſoever Knowledge he may have of him, God he hath not, and that Knowledge will prove his torment; whatſoever a man may know of the infinite Being, the glorious Majeſty of his infinite Wiſdom, and Power, and God-head; whatſoever Knowledge he hath, it will be the torment of the Soul at laſt, if ſo be that there be not a Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

2. I offer this to be conſidered of, How can ſuch believe? *How ſhall they believe on him of whom they have not heard*, and whom they have not *known*? And

And if there be no believing, there can be no ſalvation; for he that believeth not ſhall be damned.

3. How can they love him? How can they love Chriſt, that know not Chriſt? And what a dreadful ſentence is gone out againſt them that love not the Lord Jeſus, 1 *Cor.* 16. *Them that love not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let them be Anathema, Maranatha,* accurſed. The Lord will come.

4. How can they repent that know not Chriſt? There can be no true right repentance, where there is not the Knowledge of Chriſt; it is the Knowledge of Chriſt, and of God in Chriſt, that brings the heart over to repentance: The Soul will never come to repent with a repentance unto life, if ſo be there be not an apprehenſion of the Grace of God in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: — And then conſider the danger; except we repent, we ſhall be ſure to periſh.

5. How apt are ſuch to riſe up in oppoſition to God, to Chriſt, and the wayes of the Goſpel, that know him not? Obſerve that Scripture, 1 *Joh.* 16. The time will come, when they will excommunicate you, caſt you out of their Synagogues, and they that kill you ſhall think they do God ſervice in ſo doing. — And why? — becauſe they know neither the Father nor me; they know not me nor my Father, and therefore they will do theſe things to you, and yet they will think they do God very good ſervice. This is the miſchief that follows upon the ignorance of Chriſt.

6. Conſider this, That ſad ſpeech of the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 14. If our Goſpel be hid, and Chriſt who is held forth in the Goſpel, why then the Goſpel is hid to them that are loſt; in whom the God of this

this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.

7. I argue thus, If it be as our Saviour ſpeaks, eternal life to know the true God, and him whom he hath ſent, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, *Joh.* 17. why then it follows on the contrary, This is eternal death to be ignorant of the true God, and of Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent.

8. And then I add further, That this will be the aggravation of the guilt of ſuch perſons as minded not the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, never ſet their hearts to ſeek after it; this will be the aggravation, That light did come into the world, and yet they love darkneſs rather than light; that there was a bleſſed beaming out of the light of the Knowledge of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and yet no regard at all unto that Knowledge, nor no improvement of thoſe means whereby that knowledge might be attained: This will be the condemnation, and the aggravating of the guilt, and the ſtrengthening of the condemnation.

9. I add yet further, That ſuch perſons as are awanting to the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, eſpecially in a day wherein this Knowledge may be had and attained: I ſay this; ſuch perſons, they lye open to a dreadful ſtroke of judgment in this world; according to that which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 14. *If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.* It runs in the ſame form and frame with that dreadful paſſage, in *Rev.*22. *Him that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; let him that is filthy, be filthy ſtill.* This is ſpoken, not in an approving way, but in a judicial way; Let them that are filthy, be filthy ſtill: And I have had occaſion lately to ſpeak upon this Scripture, that this Judgment is now in execu-

tion

tion amain at this very day; That they that have been unjuſt, and formal, and hypocritical, and would not own the holy wayes of God when they were diſcovered to them, and clearly made known, but dote upon their own fancies; Judgment is gone out upon them, let them be filthy ſtill, let them be vain, and formal, and ſuperſtitious, and what not; and let them ſo live, and ſo die. So in this form the Apoſtle gives out the Judgment, *If any man be ignorant*; one that lives under the means of light and knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, having a price in his hand to get Knowledge, and hath no heart to it, doth not care for the commodity, hath it not in any due eſteem; he would rather be acquainted with the myſteries of a Trade, than with the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God; be more acquainted with the politicks of the World, than with the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, and ſo ſets light by this Knowledge; that Judgment, ſuch are in danger to have it go out againſt them. *If any man be ignorant*, and have a mind to be ignorant, and his heart is not touched with the ſenſe of the knowledge of Chriſt, nor his affections doth not move and ſtir within him after that knowledge, that he may come to be made partaker of it; *If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant*, let him go on in his blindneſs, let the Devil blindfold him, and hood-wink him; he *will* not ſee, he *ſhall* not ſee till he come to ſee in a judicial way.

And then I cloſe up this branch of the Diſcourſe thus: Think but this, and let this be ſeriouſly conſidered of, by all that neglect the good knowledge of Chriſt, and do not ſet their hearts upon it, are not carryed out in deſire after an advance in it. The day will come, when they that will not know Chriſt

now, care not to be acquainted with him, and with the Myſteries of his Kingdom; the day will come when Chriſt will know them, I, but ſo as that he will not know them. Here's a paradox, but yet it is a truth; the day will come when Chriſt will know them, ſo as never to know them to all eternity; he will know them with a knowledge of apprehenſion, in a judicial way; he will know them to have been ſuch as cared not to know him; he will know them to have been ſuch as never ſet their hearts upon this good knowledge, this excellent beneficial knowledge, that they might be partakers of; he will know them to be ſuch as have neglected all thoſe bleſſed means which have been afforded to them; that they might come to advance in the Knowledge of Chriſt, — I, and he will know them ſo as not to know them, and profeſs unto them, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you*: you would not know me, you would not know the Myſteries of my Kingdom: I do declare here before all the world, I never knew you, nor I never will, I will never know you, not to the days of eternity; I never did know you, I never will know you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity. Let theſe things be conſidered which I have thus ſpoken, with reſpect unto ſuch as do not mind the Knowledge of Chriſt.

But now 2ly. And it may be this may more concern the generality of the Auditory.

But before I come to that, ſome may be apt to ſay; O, but I hope we are without the reach of this laſh, for we do know, we know Chriſt, and we can give an account of Chriſt; many are apt to think thus, and to fancy thus with themſelves, that they are good Proficients in this Knowledge: But I ſay,

I ſay, take heed that the light that is in us be not darkneſs, and the knowledge that is in us be not found to be ignorance. — What knowledge is it? — It may be a formal, notional knowledge (as I ſpake before) many they can clatter over a form of words concerning Chriſt, they can ſay their Belief from one end to the other, and not miſs a word; and this is all their Religion, they underſtand nothing of what they ſay; they have gotten a form of words ſetled upon their memories, but alas, they underſtand nothing of what they ſay. But I ſhall ſpeak more to that.

But the ſecond way that this reproof goes, and this complaint, it looks upon the faces of perſons concerning whom there is better hope, that they may know, and know to ſome good purpoſe, and yet not know to ſuch a degree as they ought to do, and ſo are culpable as not anſwering the duty of the Text, which requires a growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. You may be able to make a Judgment, by the things that have been ſo largely handled in the Doctrinal part of this Text: Much hath been ſpoken, according to what my line would reach to, concerning the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

And here now is this to conſider of, whether we be not deſerving blame upon this account, that though we know ſomething, and it may be ſomething to good purpoſe, in the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt; yet we have not ſet our hearts to make the advance in this knowledge, and that progreſs, and to come to ſuch a meaſure and degree in knowledge as we ought and might have done, according to time and means; and truly I think that there is none of us, but we may find this cauſe to complain,

Ah, ſweet Saviour, how little do I know of thee? I remember how that holy *Agur* doth bemoan himſelf, even upon ſuch a like account, *Prov.* 30. *Surely I am more bruitiſh than any man, I have not the underſtanding of a man; I neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy:* Thus he bemoans himſelf. O, ſurely, ſurely, we may moſt complain and ſay, O ſweet Saviour, how little a matter do I know of thee? Some little ſmatterings there are, but alas, it's nothing to what might be known and apprehended concerning thee.

And what's the fruit of this, That Believers, holy Perſons, ſuch as have the grace of God in truth, have not more advance in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Myſteries of his Kingdom: what are the conſequences? and truly the conſequences are the evidences that there is not that advance, and that growth in this holy Knowledge. How ſad are the conſequences that Chriſtians know no more of God, are not more inſighted in the Myſteries concerning Chriſt.

1. Whence it comes to paſs, That we advance no more in faith; for undoubtedly, if we grow more in Knowledge, we ſhould grow more in Faith: Did we but more clearly apprehend and underſtand the Myſteries of the Goſpel concerning our Lord Jeſus, what a curious caſt there is in the buſineſs of ſalvation, by Jeſus Chriſt; did we but more clearly underſtand, and apprehend, and know the continuance of that Myſterie, it would moſt largely contribute to the promoting of a Beleevers faith; and the unbelief would fall flat down on its face before this Knowledge, if ſo be it were but duly improved.

2. Again, This is the conſequence: We love the Lord

Lord Jeſus, with a poor inconſiderable degree of love. — Why? Becauſe we know but little, little of his excellencies, little of that pretiouſneſs that is inhim; and as our knowledge is, ſo will our love be; much knowledge, much love; little knowledge, little love: Surely, if we had but more through acquaintance with Chriſt, we ſhould come to have our hearts more fired with the love of Chriſt; our hearts would burn within us, if ſo be that we had but more intimate acquaintance with him, and had but a more clear underſtanding of the Myſteries of the Goſpel.

3. And ſo for Deſire. O, if ſo be there were but that advance in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus, our deſires would ſparkle and flame out moſt ſtrongly after this deſirable Chriſt. When the Spouſe had informed the Daughters of *Jeruſalem* what a choice one, what an incomparable one he was, then they cry out, O thou faireſt among Women, tell us whither thy Beloved is gone, that we may ſeek him with thee.

4. Whence is it, that there is ſo much ſtraightheartedneſs to the pretious priviledges of the Goſpel, that we do not prize them more, that we do not ſet our hearts more upon them? — That great priviledge of Juſtification, — of Adoption, — of acceſs to God — of acceptance with God; — and that God ſhould not be aſhamed to be called our God (to which I ſpake the laſt day.) Whence is it that we be not taken more with holy admirings of theſe great and glorious priviledges, but becauſe we are not more inſighted in the Myſterie of the Goſpel concerning Chriſt. Whence is it that we do not make more account of Juſtification, forgiveneſs of ſins, which is a moſt pretious mercy? We do not

know Christ as we should, and what it cost him to bring over to us the forgiveness of our sins.

5. Whence is it that we are so apt to be tampering with that accursed thing, with sin, that we are so apt to be upon complyance with it, and upon gratifications of it, and of the lusts of it? We know not Christ; did we know Christ, what he suffered, that he might satisfie the Justice of God for the sins of his People, what soul-conflicts he had, and how he was pressed under the burden of the wrath of God, that he might deliver his People from the everlasting Curse and Condemnation, it would make us fear and tremble, and take heed how ever we deal with that accursed thing, and throw away that bloody knife that cut the very throat, and stabb'd the very heart of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

6. Whence is it that we are so apt to be muddling with the World, and apt to have our hearts set upon these beggerly vanities here below? Whence is it, but because we know not our Lord Jesus Christ as we ought to know? Did we but know what a pretious Christ he was, we would set light by the World, and account nothing of it in comparison of the Lord Jesus.

7. Whence is it that poor souls are so apt to be tossed with every wind of Temptation, and to be unsetled upon every occasion, as touching their peace and inward comfort, but because they are very short in the knowledge of the Mysterie concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, and the riches of Grace that discovers it self in him? As, let the guilt be what it can be that may be represented to the Conscience, the Conscience may yet upon the true knowledge and apprehension of the Grace of God

God in our Lord Jesus, bear up with boldness, and make a challenge unto men and devils, and say, Who shall lay any thing unto our charge, when we know that concerning Christ, concerning his Death, concerning the merit of his Sacrifice, concerning his Acceptance with the Father, concerning his pleading in the behalf of his People at his Father's right hand? We have that knowledge of the Lord Jesus that we bear up with glorious confidence, and with blessed boldness; and we are not afraid to look men and devils in the face; we know who it is that is once for all entred into the holy place that is not made with hands, and appears before God in heaven, representing the merit of his Sacrifice; and for our parts we now can triumph with a holy boldness, and say, Who shall lay any thing to our charge? We have no conscience of sin; though we make conscience of sinning, yet we have no conscience to charge against us: O this would be our fruit of the well advanced and improved knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

These things, Brethren, would be considered of by us; and to close up this part of the Discourse, I have only this to say, That if so be that any of us do think in our consciences that we deserve to come under this lash of reproof, and that this Complaint may be justly taken up against us, That we have not so minded as we ought, the knowledge of Christ, and have not set our endeavours as we should, that we may come to grow in this knowledge. Then to close up all (for I would willingly give a dispatch to this part of the Text) I would only speak a few words in a way of Exhortation; and I would thus perswade in the Name of the Lord,

That as it is the duty of the Text, so it may be

the matter of your practice for to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. — And here you must consider, that this knowledge, as also the Grace that God gives, so the knowledge that you may have, and are to have of Christ, it comes not in all at once. Shall I express my self thus (if it may not be too low for the Argument:) The Lord, in managing of his Trade with his People, he doth not deal by whole-sale, but rather by retale; he doth parcel out, and give by parcels, dispences by parcels; now a little, and then a little; now a little Grace, then a little more; now a little light, and then a little further improvement: The Sun, it gives not out its full light at once; so Christ, and therefore it is that there is a growth in Grace, and a growth in Knowledge, and in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus. So then, reckon upon it, we are but in the way, and so we know but in part, and prophesie but in part; and we are not comprehensaries, we come not to the full of that which is to be known; press on, and after, and increase in the Knowledge of Christ. I need no other Arguments than what have been already presented to you in the Doctrinal part.

It is the most excellent Knowledge.

It is the most beneficial Knowledge in all respects, according to what hath been accounted to you. Now, there are but these three things, which I shall dispatch in few words.

First, I would have you to consider, what knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ it is that you are to grow in; not a notional knowledge, not to much in that, so as you should rest in a bare notional knowledge, and a form of knowledge; but you must know this, That the Knowledge of our Lord

Jesus,

Jesus, which you are to endeavour a growth in, it is a spiritual Knowledge, an inward spiritual Knowledge, a heart Knowledge; it is not a knowledge of Christ after the flesh, no, not in that sense which the Apostle may mean in the second of the *Corinthians*, *We have known Christ after the flesh*; that is, they knew him, and they knew him so as to see him with their bodily eyes; 'tis not this Knowledge of Christ: though, if you have this spiritual Knowledge, you will in due time have this knowledge and sight of him; *but now we know Christ no more so* (as he saith there.) Though we have known Christ after the flesh, as he was known to the Disciples when he was here in the state of humiliation, and conversant in the World; *We have known Christ after the flesh, but henceforth know we him so no more*: Nor is it any carnal Knowledge, but to increase in the Knowledge of Christ, according to the Mysterie, which is *Christ in you, the hope of Glory*. You should labour to increase in the Knowledge of him, which answers his Constitution, who was made a Priest, Prophet and King; not after the Law of a carnal Commandment, but after the power of an endless life; as in *Heb.* 7.

You are to endeavour increase in the Knowledge of Christ, which is a confiding knowledge, — and a conforming Knowledge; — such a knowledge of him as is a fiducial knowledge, — such a knowledge, as that by knowing him, to come to be more and more inabled to rest and rely upon him; that you can say, I know so much of the Lord Jesus, that I can sit down and look no further; I have enough, I have the desire of my heart, here I can boldly trust, here I can fix and stay, without any mis-

misgivings; I know this foundation is strong enough to bear up the whole weight of my soul.

And then you are to indeavour to grow in that Knowledge, which is a conforming knowledge, that knowledge by which you come to be molded into a conformity to the Lord Jesus; so as what you know of his Wisdom, and Meekness, and Patience, and Humility, and Heavenly mindedness, you know him in these things, so as that you come to grow up into conformity to him: This is the Knowledge, or else your light will be darkness, and your knowledge will be found to be ignorance.

And then I press upon you, that you would endeavour to grow in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. — Now, what especially of the Knowledge of Christ would you have us to grow in? — I'll only mention two things briefly.

First, That you would labour to grow more and more in the Knowledge of the infinite fulness, and sufficiency, and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may know what a powerful Christ he is, what an able Christ he is, how able to do exceeding abundantly above all you ask or think. I remember it was the blessing of *Judah*, that his hand should be sufficient for him, *Deut.* 33. Christ is the head of *Judah*, he is the Lord of *Judah*'s Tribe; and to be sure this blessing rests upon his head, his hand shall be sufficient for him, to remove Mountains, to break gates of brass, to cut in sunder bars of iron; he is able to do all that concerns his Church, and every Saint that belongs to him, and that the Father hath given him; he is present to go through his work, and he will not leave any part nor parcel of it undone. O this is pretious know-

knowledge, which we ſhould endeavour to advance in, that we may come to be more full in the apprehenſions of the fulneſs of ſufficiency, of the power of our Lord Jeſus, that whatſoever work lyes upon his hand to perform, he will be found all-ſufficient to accompliſh and bring to paſs; he is ſufficient to preſent all that the Father hath given him, without ſpot and blame, before the preſence of his Glory, with exceeding joy; and though there be the power of Devils, and World, and Corruption, that may labour for to wreſt a ſoul out of the hands of Chriſt, why ſaith he, *None ſhall be ever able to pluck them out of my hands.* And then,

2ly. That you would know the ſingular eminency of the love of Chriſt, which is a love that paſſes knowledge. And the Apoſtle preſſes this upon us, in *Eph.* 3. ſaith he, I bow my knees, *&c.* that you may be able to comprehend with all Saints, the heights, and depths, and breadths, and lengths. — And what do theſe dimenſions refer to? — Why, ſaith he, *That you may know the love of Chriſt that paſſeth knowledge*; that you may know it in the *height* of it, in the *depths*, in the *breadths*, in the *lengths* of it. O, ſaith he, this is the Knowledge that I would have you increaſe and grow in, that ſo you may come to be filled with all the fulneſs of God. O this love is ſuch a love as we can never know enough of, That Chriſt hath ſuch love to his Father, as to comply with his deſigns concerning a ſinful World; — and that he ſhould bear ſuch love to a company of vile wretches, ugly, defiled, loathſom creatures, that he would not ſtick at the laying down of his Life, and ſhedding his Blood to ſave them from eternal vengeance. O, ſaith the Apoſtle, ſtudy this, that you may comprehend the height,

and

and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of Christ, which passes Knowledge, and then shall you come to be filled with all the fulness of God.

I have only this one thing further: — But what shall we do to grow in the Knowledge of Christ?

First, When you have improved well; *To him that hath shall be given.*

Labour to be more humble: If you be of meek and humble frames of heart, and do not swell with notions, truly Christ will delight to communicate more of his Knowledge to you.

And then love him more: If you would love him more, you should know him more; as knowledge will help to increase love, so love to Christ upon what we do know, will contribute to the promoting of our Knowledge.

And then, what you do know, make use of it, practice it, and labour to keep in an obediential frame: *If any man will do his will, he shall know*, &c.

And then you must pray for this Knowledge, that the Lord would open the eyes of your understanding: *I am a stranger in the earth, O hide not thy Commandments from me.*

And then, the whole Scriptures, they testifie of Christ; and if you would know much of Christ, be much in the study of the Scriptures. There are two Scriptures, which I would (not in the least to take you off from the searching into others) have persons to be well studied in, to desire to advance in the Knowledge of Christ: — There is first, the Song of *Solomon*, — and the Book of the *Revelations*. The Song of *Solomon*: The studying of that Book, will much promote your knowledge in the love of Christ, when you shall come to see what a

spirit

ſpirit breaths in that bleſſed Book, that Song of Songs, what a ſpirit of love doth breath there; you will come to know the love of Chriſt, how dear he is over his Spouſe, over his Children, over all that are given to him: O how he delights in them, and to hold converſe with them, and how he can over-look their ſpots and blemiſhes, and look upon them as fair, and having no ſpot in them. It is admirable to conſider what endeavours there are on the part of Chriſt over his beloved Spouſe: that Book well ſtudied, will promote your Knowledge in the love of Chriſt. — And then, the Book of the *Revelations*, it is a Scripture that is given us for pretious purpoſes; and being well ſtudied, it will contribute much to the advancing in the knowledge of Chriſt, of his Glory, and Power, and Greatneſs. There we come to have diſcoveries made to us, of what Enemies he hath, — and what Victories he ſhall get, — and what triumphs he ſhall maintain, — and what glory ſhall be ſetled upon him, — and what injoyments there ſhall be between him and the Bride in due time; and we ſhall come to underſtand more fully what bleſſed days, Sun-ſhine days, days of light and liberty, of joy and comfort, when tears ſhall be wiped away from the eyes of his poor mourners here on earth, and they ſhall come to *Zion* with everlaſting joy, and ſorrow and mourning ſhall flee away.

And ſo I have done with this Knowledge. Now, the Lord make you wiſe to conſider, and give us hearts to ſet to it, that we may anſwer our duty according to the charge in the Text.

SERM.

318 18

SERM. XIX.

2 PET. 3. 18.

To him be Glory, both now and for ever. Amen.

HAving ſpent ſeveral years in the handling of this Chapter; and having in the former Exerciſe, been driving at this, That there may be a growing in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; I am now to iſſue all that hath been ſpoken, according to what the Text now guides me to, in a Doxologie, that is, in an honourable acknowledgment of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as a Perſon unto whom *Glory* is moſt righteouſly to be aſcribed. Thus the words ſignifie to us, according to the ſound of them, *To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

Words of pretious import, words of common uſe. It were much to be wiſhed, both for Miniſters and Chriſtians, that are upon the frequent uſage of them, that it may be very carefully lookt unto, that while we keep a form of words, and hold up a form of words, and make uſe of them in ordinary courſe, we be not awanting to that which is imported in them; and loſe not the Spirit, while we hold forth the Letter.

To him be Glory, both now and for ever. Amen.

And there is infinite cauſe, that when theſe words ſound in our ears, we ſhould be moſt free to ſay our *Amen* unto them; a ſweet cloſe of a ſacred and ſaving

ſaving piece of Scripture: And truly it is well becoming men and women profeſſing godlineſs, for to be moſt cordial unto the uttering and expreſſing of this language, the language of the Text.

'Tis a becoming cloſe for every Sermon that's Preacht, for every Prayer that is made, for every Duty performed, for every Mercy that's received, and for all that's teſtified of God and Chriſt, to iſſue all thus; *Now unto him be glory, both now and for ever, Amen.* We have the Letter; the great matter is, to look to it, that we loſe not the Spirit, that we be not (as I ſaid) in the uſage of a form, and in the mean time be ſtrangers to the Power.

There is ſome difference as to words, and phraſe, and form of expreſſion, between this Doxologie, and ſome others that we meet withal in holy Writ. The Apoſtle *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, he forms the Doxologie thus, Chap. 16. 25. *To him that is of power to eſtabliſh you, according to my Goſpel, and the preaching of Jeſus Chriſt. To God only wiſe, be glory, through Jeſus Chriſt for ever, Amen.* — In *Eph.* 3. we have the Doxologie formed thus: *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Chriſt Jeſus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.* In 1 *Tim.* 1. we have the Doxologie formed thus: *Now unto the king eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* In the Epiſtle of *Jude*, we have the Doxologie formed thus: *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to preſent you faultleſs before the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy: To the only wiſe God our Saviour, be glory, and majeſty, dominion and power, now and ever. Amen.* — And in the Text thus:

To

To him, that is, to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *To him him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.* These are the Scripture Doxologies (some of them) which I have now referr'd you to: And you may observe, there is something of variation in words and terms; and whereas in the other Doxologies, the glory is ascribed and voted up unto God by Jesus Christ in the Churches, here the Doxologie is made to refer unto our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and so the Apostle carries it in reference unto Christ. *To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

You must not think that *Peter* was more devoted to the promoting of the honour of Christ, than of the Father, and of the Spirit; not that he doth exclude the Father, and the Spirit; the eternal Father, and the eternal Spirit, from out of the bounds of this Doxologie: — or that he hath not an holy aim at the Glory of the Father, and of the Spirit, as well as at the Glory of the Lord Jesus, the second Person; no, nothing less than so. The truth is, no man can honour the Son, but in honouring him he honours the Father and the Spirit too; no person can give glory to Christ, but he must give glory to the Father and to the Spirit too: but the wisdom of the Spirit appears in this, and his direction, that sometimes the Doxologie should in terms be referred unto God, Father, Son, and holy Spirit; sometimes it should be so formed, as to have a reference unto the second Person, considered as Mediator; and so in the Text: — And there may be some reason why the Apostle *Peter* should refer this Doxologie unto our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, not mentioning in terms, the Father, or the Spirit, and putting it in the ordinary form; *To God only wise,*

To the great God, be glory for ever. But thus; *To him*, who is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *be glory, now and for ever.* There may be this apprehension, that the Apostle *Peter* minding and remembring the great disservice that he had done to Christ, when he was under his abasing, and what dishonour was done to him by his threefold shameful denying of him; he would now leave the best Testimony behind him that he could, of his devotedness to the exalting of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, he would leave the best Testimony to all Posterity that he could: And so in this Epistle, and in this closing Doxologie, he makes mention of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, voting and wishing up, making this application to him, praying this, and wishing this, and voting this unto him, that Glory may be unto him, both now and for ever, Amen. And so you have this more general account concerning these words.

Where you have some matter, *To him be glory*: To him; to whom? To our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To *him* be Glory; a Duty, or a Vote, an Apprecation, that is, a praying unto him. A fit word to be used, the sense whereof is as I say, an Apprecation, a praying up to Christ, a praying over to Christ, a voting over to Christ; *To him be glory.* This is the Apprecation.

And then there is the Time; To him be Glory, *Now*: Now let him have Glory, now while there is time, while time continues, and as long as there is any time; as long as there is a *Now*, as long as we can say *Now*, why so long let glory be to him: To him be glory *Now*, now in this present time, and as long as time shall continue, as long as there is

but a nick of time; if there be but a *Now* of time, one now, even now, and in this present time, be glory to him.

And then, *For ever*; not now only, but let it be for ever; let it be a standing business, let there be acknowledgment of honour and glory to Christ: *Now*; I, *and when there shall be no more time*, even in Eternity, let there be an acknowledgment of Glory to Christ Jesus. *Now, and for ever*; in the Original it is εἰς ἡμέραν αἰῶνος, unto the day of Eternity. *Now*, and unto the day of Eternity, to him be Glory; to him be Glory now, and to him be Glory, *In diem æternitatis*, even to the day of Eternity: Such a day there will come, and it will be such a day as will swallow up Time, that came out of the womb of Eternity, before *Time* was; and Time shall be swallowed up of the Eternity that shall follow, when Time shall be no more; and that shall be a standing and lasting day, a day that shall know no night, and a day that shall know no limits and bounds, but it shall be a lasting day, and a day of Eternity: Such a day there will be, which shall be a dreadful day unto wicked ones, that live and die in unbelief and impenitency; they shall have a day, or rather a night of eternity, a black burning night that will never have a dawning morning, no, never have a dawning morning.

But then there will be a bright and lightsom Sunshine day, that shall never have a cloud upon it, a day of Eternity; and in this day of Eternity, this work is to be performed; and this Glory in this long day of Eternity, is appointed and voted up to the Lord Jesus; To him be Glory, both now, and to the day of Eternity.

And then we have the confirmation of all, *Amen*.

O let it be ſo, *Amen*; O ſo it ſhall be, unto this Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, be Glory for ever, *Amen*; O be it ſo, *Amen*; O it ſhall be ſo. I, thus the Apoſtle ſhuts up this pretious Doxologie, this bleſſed Epiſtle which I have treated of ſo long.

Now, what are we to gather from hence? This is the only thing that remains to be done, which is, to give you an account of this one Point from the Text.

That they that are acted by a Goſpel Spirit, & have any ſaving Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are and will be moſt ſtrongly devoted to the Glory of Jeſus Chriſt, to have Glory given to Jeſus Chriſt. This is the Doctrine, and conſider of it well, *Now and for ever*, and will come in with their vote, and ſay, *Amen*. This is the thing that I offer.

There was never ſince the Goſpel ſounded in the World, never any perſon that heard and knew this joyful ſound, but they would have a tongue to ſay, *Now unto him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.* Thoſe references which I made before to the Doxologie, in the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, *Epheſians*, *Timothy*, *Jude*, and other places which might have been referr'd unto; they are all a ſufficient proof of this Doctrine that I have now delivered unto you, That ſuch a ſpirit doth act in all thoſe that know the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to any purpoſe, that this is the proper ſpirit and genous of the Goſpel, and of a Goſpel ſpirit, for to have Honour, and Glory, and Dominion, and Majeſty given up to Chriſt. *Paul* was moſt lively to this diſcovery, as appears by thoſe Scriptures; when he comes to fall upon the mentioning of Chriſt, he would make a diverſion of purpoſe, leaving the proſecution of his cauſe, that

he might give up honour to the Lord Jesus Christ; as in 1 *Tim.* 1. saith he, speaking before, I was such and such a Persecutor, and a Blasphemer, and the chiefest of sinners; *Howbeit* (saith he) *for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which hereafter should believe on him to eternal life.* — Now mark you the diversion; out of the pregnancy of his Gospel spirit, he leaves the Argument he was driving, and breaks forth upon this Doxologie; as if he should say, O I have mentioned Jesus Christ, *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.* He cannot mention him without a Doxologie; O unto this only wise God, this Lord Jesus Christ, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Now, there is infinite cause and reason why there should be such an apprecation (understand the word *Apprecation*, a praying to Christ.) I have said already, it is the spirit of the Gospel, and they that are acted by that spirit, will be most pregnant this way, they cannot hold. The Disciples I id, We cannot but speak the things that concern the honour of God, and the Glory of Christ, we are not able to hold our peace; and when the Disciples were rebuked, and the Children, for crying *Hosanna*, &c. Why, saith Christ, if they should hold their peace, the very stones would speak; they must be crying out, Glory to God, Honour to Christ. — This was that which was propheſied in *Psal.* 72. where you have that that concerns Christ, *v.* 15. *He shall redeem the soul of the poor and needy from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight; he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba.* Typically understand it according to the time

time of *Solomon*, who ſhould be very much inriched with offerings; but underſtand it in the Myſtery of Chriſt; *To him ſhall be given of the gold of Sheba* the gold of Praiſe, and honour and Glory: *Prayer alſo ſhall be made for him continually, and daily ſhall he be praiſed.* Underſtand this of Chriſt in the Myſtery; *Prayer alſo ſhall be made for him continually.* — What Prayer? — Doth Chriſt in heaven need the prayers of his People? — Underſtand, — They ſhall be continually praying up his Glory, an apprecation of Glory to Jeſus: O let him be glorified, O let him be exalted, O let his Name be magnified; Prayer ſhall continually be made for him, that his Name may be lifted up in the World, that his Kingdom may be inlarged, that his Throne may be eſtabliſhed, that upon his head the Crown may flouriſh. It was the manner of old, to vote up, and to make apprecation, *Let the King live for ever*; why, O King, O Jeſus, live for ever; O Jeſus, be thou glorified for ever; O Jeſus, let thy throne flouriſh; O Jeſus, let thy Crown flouriſh upon thy head: why this is the apprecation. And as I was ſaying, there is infinite cauſe why it ſhould be thus, and that this language ſhould ſound in every mouth, where there is any touch upon the heart; *To him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

Firſt, This is that which doth moſt fully comport with God the Father's deſign concerning his Son: For mark you, Chriſt having glorified the Father by his moſt voluntary and free ſubjection to him in the ſervice of the Goſpel, and in order to the ſaving of ſouls. Jeſus Chriſt having glorified the Father in this great ſervice of ſaving the world, why the Father now ſets his heart upon the Son for to glorifie him, and that's the great deſign of God,

to have the Name of his Son Jesus Christ lifted up, that Christ may be glorified; and God the Father, and God the Spirit, do not account themselves honoured and glorified, if the Lord Jesus Christ be not glorified: So that I say, in that regard it is most righteous that it should be thus, that there should be an appreciation, and a wishing, and voting up of Honour and Glory to Christ, because it is that wherein we do most fully comport with the design of the great God, concerning his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; he having humbled himself, and becoming obedient unto the death of the Cross, God hath exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every name; and he will have Honour and Glory given to Christ.

2ly. Consider this, Christ is most worthy of it, in respect of himself; he is most worthy to have an appreciation made of Glory to him, and that every breathing soul should breath out after this manner, and say, *To him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

Worthy of it, O most worthy of it, that every thing that hath breath should give Glory to him. Do but consider that passage, in *Rev.* 5. 11, 12. *I heard the voice of many Angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.* Do but weigh this; think with your selves what a vote here was; The voice of many Angels, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. — and what's their vote? —*Saying with a loud voice, WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing; and*

every

every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Mark what a spirit here is: Here's the vote of Angels and Saints in the fullest conjunction, *Nemine contra dicente*, not one contradicting, voting up Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.

He is worthy; worthy is the Lamb.

Upon what account worthy? — Worthy, because the Lamb; yea, I say, worthy is the Lamb, because he is the Lamb; the Lamb of God, the Lamb that was slain; its a name that he delights to be known by, the Lamb upon Mount *Sion*; worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

And because a Lamb slain, because he was pleased to become an Offering and a Sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour, and would undertake to redeem a People unto God by his Blood; worthy therefore to have this acknowledgment made to him, O worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

Here now I have a large field to walk in, but that I would contract my self, and dispatch the Point: The Lord Jesus Christ, worthy.

Consider first of all, who he is for his Person; why he is *the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person*; worthy therefore to have Glory given to him.

2. What is he for his Name? *Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, the Lord our righteousness, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, the blessed and only Potentate, the*

Prince of the Kings of the earth; his Name is as an ointment poured forth: Well may it be ſaid, *To him be glory, now and for ever.*

3. Conſider his Qualifications; *The only begotten of the Father, full of Grace*: Then, if full of *Grace*, worthy to be full of *Glory*. Grace leads in Glory, and Glory doth moſt properly follow Grace: Who ſhould have Glory, but they that have Grace? Why none have ſo much Grace as Chriſt, he was as full of Grace as ever he could hold: Now, where ſhould Glory reſt, but upon him that is full of Grace? Therefore worthily is it ſaid, *To him be Glory.*

4. Then again, Conſider this Jeſus, this Lord Jeſus, Why he ſuffer'd, he ſuffer'd for ſin; *The juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God.* He ſuffered, and by ſuffering made ſatisfaction to infinite Juſtice; he hath expiated the ſins of his People, provided for the purging of their Conſciences; he hath made way by his own Blood for an entrance into the Holieſt. Now, is there not reaſon to ſay, *To him be glory, both now and for ever?* Mark what our Saviour ſpeaks after his Reſurrection, ſaith he, *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer*: And what then? *And afterwards to enter into his glory.* It behoved him firſt to ſuffer, and then to enter into Glory; and he hath entred into Glory, and it is our duty for to follow him with loudeſt acclamations, and to ſay, yea, yea, *To him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

5. And then again, Chriſt is moſt worthy to have theſe acclimations, and ſuch Doxologies, a voting up, and application of Glory to him. Why? Becauſe all the Glory that ever any Saint on earth ſhall have, or Saint in heaven doth poſſeſs, all that Glory comes

over

over to them by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Whatſoever Glory any ſoul here ſhall be partaker of, or hereafter in the Kingdom of Glory, they are to reckon themſelves beholding to Chriſt for it, it comes over to them by his means. Worthy then is this apprecation to be made to him; and that every ſoul that hath any hopes of Glory, ſhould ſay, *Now unto him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.* So that theſe things being duly weighed, which indeed are of proper cognizance for men and women profeſſing godlineſs, and profeſſing to be acted by a Goſpel ſpirit: What is there that ſhould more properly ſound in an Aſſembly of People, that attend to the Goſpel? What can more properly ſound than this, That unto the King of *Sion*, the Lamb that was ſlain, to him that is the King of the Princes of the earth, — to him that is ſet upon the Throne with his Father, to him that hath overcome Principalities and Powers, — hath made a ſhew of them openly, — to him that hath vanquiſhed Devils and enemies, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light, to him that is now entred into the Holieſt once for all, and appears in the heavens before God, to plead the Cauſe of his Peoples ſouls: What is there more proper in a Congregation of Saints, to ſound out, than this? *To him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

Now in a word, for Application. Are they acted by a Goſpel ſpirit, that deſign nothing leſs than the Glory of Chriſt; that inſtead of making apprecations, and voting up Glory to our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, do what in them lyes to caſt all the ſhame, and diſhonour, and contempt upon him they can? Is this the ſpirit of the Goſpel? It's the ſpirit of the Devil. That man, be he who he will; let them be never ſo high in the World, let them be

Kings,

Kings, and Princes, and Potentates, whatsoever names and titles they are known by, whatsoever dignities and honours they are advanc'd unto, whatsoever breadth they carry in the World, whatsoever they are for worldly respects, that are set to cast contempt upon Christ, and to turn reproach and dishonour upon him; are so far from being acted by the spirit of the Gospel, that they do walk in the very spirit of the Devil, and it will appear so.

But are there any such? are there such as walk in such a spirit? — There were so of old. O, people be apt to think that they were worthy to be spit in the face: — Why? what did they that cryed out, *Not this man, but Barrabas*? Let this Jesus be crucified, let him be hanged, let him be hanged for a Malefactor, do him all the shame they can. — They did so; they buffetted him, they spit upon him, they smote him with their fists, they knock'd him upon the head, they put him into a fools coat, they would make him their laughing-stock: Thus they did. — What was this spirit? Why is this spirit quite worn out of the World? — Nay, the Lord be merciful to us, there is a desperate spirit of opposition to Christ; — among whom? — among the Antichristian party. O that it were not to be found among persons that would be accounted godly, and stand for the honour of Christ, and make apprecations to him: And they can patter it over in forms of words, O Glory to Jesus; *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the holy Ghost*; they can patter over such words in their mouths, and in the mean time they carry swords in their hearts against Christ, and their Conversations speak nothing but dishonour to Christ; shame him in his Name, shame him in holding out that, shame him in making Profession

feſſion of him. — And why? — becauſe they live thus unchriſtian-like, walk moſt unſuitably to the Goſpel, walk moſt unworthy of their holy Profeſſion; are theſe men and women acted by a Goſpel ſpirit, that pretend to the Name of Chriſt, that expreſs nothing but that which is quite contrary to Chriſt? they would be accounted Chriſtian People, and to have been baptized into Chriſt's Name, and in the mean time they make it their buſineſs every day to caſt diſhonour upon Chriſt, walking croſs to him, and quite contrary to the glorious Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. — For men and women to riſe up in oppoſition to the Kingdom of Chriſt, to the ſpiritual Worſhip of Chriſt, to a holy reformation, and to do all that ever they can to hinder that God and Chriſt may not be worſhipped in the beauties of holineſs: This is to cry up, *To him be ſhame*, inſtead of ſaying, *To him be glory, both now and for ever.* No, but to him be ſhame, and to all his People, and let them be the reproach and ſcorn of the World.

2ly. And ſo to cloſe up: If ſo be that we will approve our ſelves to be acted by a Goſpel ſpirit, conſider how it muſt appear; it muſt appear by holy apprecations, and votings up of Glory to Chriſt, and to ſay, *To him be glory*; the Father gives him Glory, the Father reckons Glory to him, the Spirit gives Glory to him; *The Spirit ſhall glorifie me, he ſhall take of mine, and ſhew it unto you.* — The Angels give him Glory; *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain.* — The twenty-four Elders, and the four Beaſts make apprecations of Glory; — an innumerable number, thouſands of thouſands, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand; they ſay, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to have Glory. Now, if you

be

be men and women of a Goſpel ſpirit, let it appear by having your hearts ſet to this, to give Glory to Chriſt; — wiſh him Glory, in having the Government in your own hearts: O, to thee be Glory, ſweet Saviour, the Glory of thy Kingdom in my own ſoul; — wiſh him that Glory, the Glory of his Kingdom inlarged in the World, of having that performed which is foretold, the Kingdoms of the world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever; wiſh him that Glory, make an apprecation, vote it up to him; ſhew the ſpirit of the Goſpel, by having your hearts moſt ſtrongly devoted to have Chriſt exalted in all his offices, Prieſtly, Prophetical and Kingly office, that he may come to be the glory of the World, that he may ſway the Scepter, according to what is promiſed: This is the great thing that Chriſtians ſhould be ſet upon. I ſpeak not this as if I would cry down Civil Magiſtrates, but that Government which is belonging to Chriſt, and according to what he is anointed of the Father to, according to what is purpoſed to him; it is that we are to wiſh to him, all that honour and Glory that the Father hath deſigned him; this is that we ſhould wiſh to him, and ſay as the Apoſtle here, *To him be glory, now and for ever.*

And this is that which we are to do, not in word and tongue, as the Apoſtle ſaith; *O my little children, let us not love in word and tongue only, but in deed and truth.* So I ſay to you, my Friends, Let it not be in word and tongue only, but in heart and reality: O let your *lips* ſpeak it, let your *lives* ſpeak it, *To him be glory*; ſo live, ſo walk and carry your ſelves, as that you may give a real proof and demonſtration of it, that your hearts may be

devoted

devoted to have Christ honoured and exalted in the World.

I'll conclude all with an itteration of this Doxologie; and if ever tautologie (though it is no tautologie) but if ever there were any place for tautologie, here were the propereſt place for it to be uſed; but it is none: I have a pattern for what I ſhall now perform from the holy Spirit of God, in *Pſal.* 136. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.* Mark you how many verſes you have in that *Pſalm*, 26. verſes; and ſo many times you have this itteration, *For his mercy endureth for ever.* Will you call this tautologie? why then the *Spirit* is guilty of tautologie; twenty ſix times you find it there, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever*; he did thus and thus, *for his mercy endureth for ever*; he ſlew great Kings, *for his mercy endureth for ever*; he ſlew famous Kings, *for his mercy endureth for ever*; and he remembred us in our low eſtate, *for his mercy endureth for ever.* Here's my pattern, and let me a little follow it, and I have done, and charge me with tautologie if you can.

Thus I ſay then, take up the language of the Text, which I would do, not uſing the words without the Spirit: And thus I ſay,

Jeſus is the Son of God, *Now to him be glory for ever. Amen.*

Jeſus the Saviour of the world, *To him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

Our Lord Jeſus came into the word to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt, *To him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

Jeſus who was full of grace and truth, *Now to him be glory for ever. Amen.*

Our

Our Lord Jeſus that went about while he was here in the world, doing good, preaching the Goſpel, healing all manner of ſickneſſes and diſeaſes, and delivering them that were oppreſſed of the Devil, *To him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

Our Lord Jeſus, who took upon him to ſatisfie, even by death and ſuffering, the Juſtice of his Father, to fulfil the Law, and to expiate ſin, and to purge the Conſcience, and to deliver from damnation thoſe that were obnoxious to it; *Now unto him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

Jeſus, he is riſen again, and he is aſcended up on high; he is ſet down at the right hand of the Father, and there he appears to make interceſſion for his People; *Now to him be glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

This Jeſus he improves at the Fathers right hand, all the intereſt that he hath, for the good of his People; he communicates the Knowledge of the Myſterie of the Will of God, and he makes Revelations unto his Church and People, of thoſe things that do concern it, unto the end of the World; and thus he is beneficial to his poor People here on earth, he takss care of his Churches, and hath a tender reſpect of all his intereſt; *Now unto him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

This Jeſus is now in Heaven, in Glory, and he longs after the injoyment of all his redeemed ones, and he hath undertaken to keep them while they are in the World, and to loſe not one of them; but he will bring them to the enjoyment of himſelf, and he will have them to ſee and to ſhare in that [illegible] which he is now poſſeſſed of, now he is in [illegible] what cauſe have we to ſay, *To him be [illegible] now and for ever! Amen.*

This

This Jesus, who died and rose again, and is at God's right hand, and as I said, improves his interest for his People; O to this Lord Jesus Christ, *Be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

And so I have done.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 29 line 25, for hearing read *being*, p. 41 l. 8, for layes r. *seer*, p. 49 l. 7, f. contignity r. *contiguity*, p. 50 [illegible] r. *Rod*, p. 52 l. 8, f. can r. *cannot*, p. 56 l. 15, [illegible] *faith*, p. 62 l. 24, f. firedneſs r. *fixedneſs*, p. 65 l. 15, [illegible] p. 74 l. 30, f. ſaid r. *ſav'd*, p. 84 l. 3, f. that r. *their*, [illegible] poſition r. *oppoſition*, p. 90 l. 4, f. and r. *as*, p. 109 l. 27, [illegible] at the beginning of the line, p. 112 l. 5, dele *the* [illegible] 116 l. 18, f. ſet r. *get*, p. 127 l. 19, 20. dele *that I* [illegible] *ſo diſcours'd of*, *as*, p. 130 l. 8, f. faithful r. *faith*[illegible] 132 l. 13, f. eradicated r. *eradiated*, p. 152 l. 31, f. in [illegible] p. 158 l. 16, f. which r. *with*, p. 174 l. 17, f. that's r. *there's*, p. 195 l. 23, f. fidelial r. *fiducial*, p 197 l. 3, f. in r. *it*, p. 209 l. 27, f. eſtabliſhed r. *chaſtiſed*, p. 228 l. 12, f. for r. *from*, p. 234 l. 12 r. *things*, p. 239 l. 28, f. perfect r. *preſent*, p. 244 [illegible] f. ſuch r. *ſure*, p. 250 l. 32, r. *no*, p. 257 l. 30, f. born r. *brother*, p. 289 l. 16, f. denoted r. *devoted*, p. 292 l. 32, f. affective r. *afflictive*.

FINIS